



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**THE NEW MIDDLE EAST SECURITY THREAT: THE
CASE OF YEMEN AND THE GCC**

by

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June 2007

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE June 2007	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The New Middle East Security Threat: The Case of Yemen and the GCC			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Ibrahim Al-Hajjri				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) <p>Since Yemen has a history of border disputes with Saudi Arabia, this addresses the question of Yemen's role in the security of the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen suffers from a weak economy and a number of security issues of its own. Through the borders shared with its GCC neighbors, Yemen has become plagued by a nexus of terrorism, arms smuggling, and drug trafficking. Yet Yemen is unable to effectively combat these threats because of weak border control and poor cooperation with its regional neighbors, which points to the issues of border control and transnational cooperation within the GCC as an important area of research. The scope of the research will encompass and scrutinize the role of borders and how terrorism flourishes through the Peninsula. That way, we can observe what has been done to solve this security threat, and what could be done. The thesis will examine potential solutions to the problems created by border security and a lack of cooperation, and will argue that a viable solution can be found by Yemen joining the GCC in a united force. This would help insulate the Arabian Peninsula from the internal threats facing it.</p>				
14. SUBJECT TERMS Arabian Peninsula, Border Conflicts, Cooperation, GCC, Gulf, Military, Politics, Terrorism, Yemen			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 87	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UL	

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THE CASE OF YEMEN AND THE GCC**

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requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

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ABSTRACT

Since Yemen has a history of border disputes with Saudi Arabia, this addresses the question of Yemen's role in the security of the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen suffers from a weak economy and a number of security issues of its own. Through the borders shared with its GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) neighbors, Yemen has become plagued by a nexus of terrorism, arms smuggling, and drug trafficking. Yet Yemen is unable to effectively combat these threats because of weak border control and poor cooperation with its regional neighbors, which points to the issues of border control and transnational cooperation within the GCC as an important area of research. The scope of the research will encompass and scrutinize the role of borders and how terrorism flourishes through the Peninsula. That way, we can observe what has been done to solve this security threat, and what could be done. The thesis will examine potential solutions to the problems created by border security and a lack of cooperation, and will argue that a viable solution can be found by Yemen joining the GCC in a united force. This would help insulate the Arabian Peninsula from the internal threats facing it.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

Security in the Middle East has always been regarded as intricate. There have not been any proper solutions to security issues in the region, especially terrorism issues. In the case of the Arabian Peninsula, terrorism is one of the major hindrances in the face of stability, security, and development. Despite the efforts of the Gulf monarchies, however, terrorism remains a constant threat. While the Gulf States take their internal threats seriously, most attempts to establish legitimate fighting forces have failed and proved to malfunction. The lack of genuine cooperation between the Peninsula states has made terrorism more feasible, as governments do not cooperate on common measures to combat terrorism. This lack of cooperation is mainly due to unresolved border disputes. Not only are the borders not secured enough to completely stop terrorists from mobilizing, but they are also not completely agreed upon.

Since Yemen has a history of border disputes with Saudi Arabia, this addresses the question of Yemen's role in this security issue. Yemen suffers from a weak economy and a number of security issues of its own. Through the borders shared with its GCC neighbors, Yemen has become plagued by a nexus of terrorism, arms smuggling, and drug trafficking. Yet Yemen is unable to effectively combat these threats because of weak border control and poor cooperation with its regional neighbors, which points to the issues of border control and transnational cooperation within the GCC as an important area of research. The scope of the research will encompass and scrutinize the role of borders and how terrorism flourishes through the Peninsula. That way, it can be observed what has been done to solve this security threat, and what could be done. The thesis will examine potential solutions to the problems created by border security and a lack of cooperation, and will argue that a viable solution can be found by Yemen joining the GCC in a united force. This would help insulate the Arabian Peninsula from the internal threats facing it.

B. IMPORTANCE

Stability in the Arabian Peninsula is a vital security interest not only for the area's states, but for the U.S. government (USG) as well. As the Arabian Peninsula becomes more stable and safer, the USG will be able to pursue its interests of securing the region's oil sources and controlling nuclear proliferation. Aside from these geo-strategic concerns, eliminating terrorism is an important goal in its own right, and provides a window into studying the phenomenon of joint security cooperation in the Arabian Peninsula.

The future security of the Arabian Peninsula relies heavily on cooperation between the concerned states, and focuses on three main factors. The first factor is the resolving of the border disputes between the countries. With that being addressed, the ramifications will typically reflect better cooperation and more seriousness about securing the borders. Second, and as a result of more protected borders, terrorism will be more effectively countered with a higher success rate in quarantining and capturing terrorist networks. Third, this cooperation would not be possible with a country missing from the puzzle. This means that although Yemen is not technically a Gulf state, it shares all of the borders, and thus, has the same threats as those facing the other states. Therefore, by looking at Yemen within the context of the region as a whole, the idea of not adding it to the equation becomes impossible.

C. THE CONTROVERSY

To scrutinize the security of the Arabian Peninsula, the region has to be regarded as a whole; and not each state's security individually. Since the region is unique in many of its characteristics, it is different from many countries around the world. For example, unlike many other nations, the GCC states and Yemen have not yet reached final border agreements. It is true that there are treaties that provide resolutions, but the truth is that they are not final, and this will be demonstrated later on in Chapter II. In that chapter, it will be shown how this disagreement over borders causes bitterness and lack of cooperation in many aspects; with the security aspect topping the list. With this lack of cooperation, it was not a surprise when the GCC Shield Forces were shut down after years of failure to cooperate and to achieve a significant security apparatus. This story of

failure, along with their reliance on foreign protectors, will be discussed in chapter three of this research. Finally, in order to maintain a balance and keep the research focused, the role of Yemen and the benefits of it joining the GCC in cooperation will be discussed in Chapter IV.

To make it clear, the following literature review has been organized in the same order that research was conducted. Discussion will begin on the borders issue, and its ominous effect of inadvertently sheltering terrorism; it will then be followed with an examination of what has been done to effectively solve this security threat. Then, literature will be presented that gives convincing evidence that Yemen is indeed needed, not only as part of this equation to solve the security threat, but as a partner in the Global War on Terror with a focus on the region.

1. Internal Threat Facing the Arabian Peninsula

It is very important to define the security threat facing the Arabian Peninsula. After reading extensive literature on this topic, it is the author's opinion that the real security threat stems from the border disputes. Writing specifically about Yemen, for example, Michael Knights asserts that the "contiguous borders with Yemen and Iraq-both key theaters of operation for transnational jihadists- make the country a critical transshipment point for weaponry and jihadists engaged in a multidirectional flow of personnel and equipment throughout the GCC."¹ The way to limit the contribution of contiguous borders to terrorism, Knights argues, is by enhancing border security. "The threat posed by terrorists from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen can be further reduced by getting serious about border security."²

Many authors emphasize the importance of the border security issue, especially between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Joseph Kechichian argues, for example, that "with the exception, perhaps, of the Saudi-Yemen boundary question should be seen in a regional

¹ Michael Knights, *Troubled Waters: Future U.S. Security Assistance in the Persian Gulf* (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006), 35.

² Ibid., 42.

context in which states are striding actively to finalize the political map.”³ However, until this day, this issue has not been studied enough by scholars, like Askar Al-enazy said “The current literature on the subject contains no published academic work dealing directly with the legal aspects of the Saudi-Yemeni border conflict.”⁴

Not only are the internal borders a problem in the security of the Peninsula, but the external borders too. For example, through the eastern part of the Peninsula, it is believed that there are forces that are connected with the Mujahedeen movements in Afghanistan. “They are concentrated in the eastern shores of the Gulf and Yemen. They fight for the establishment of ‘true’ Muslim states in the region, and are against foreign military presence.”⁵ Of course, there are other terrorist networks roaming the Peninsula, with Al-Qaeda on top of that list. Therefore, it is safe to infer that terrorism evolves on a higher scale in the Peninsula due to weak border security.

2. Previous Security Forces Protecting the Arabian Peninsula

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was created on May 25, 1981. Security was one of the main reasons that brought about the GCC. The Iran-Iraq war posed a threat which the individual states in the Arab Gulf knew they could not handle on their own. As such, they grouped together to form a mutual defense plan. The GCC members all set out to strengthen their military capabilities by ordering top of the line weapons and equipment⁶. However, the forces were more symbolic in a way, after proving to be useless during the Iraq invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Even though the military equipment provided exceeded billions in U.S. dollars, “... the Peninsular Shield Forces, a GCC reaction force of roughly brigade size, was not utilized or alerted during the entire crisis.”⁷

³ Joseph A. Kechichian, *Iran, Iraq and the Arab Gulf States* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 213.

⁴ Askar Al-enazy, *The Long Road from Taif to Jeddah: Resolution of Saudi-Yemeni Boundary Dispute* (Emirates Center for Strategic Studies, 2006), 2.

⁵ Majid Tehranian, *Bridging a Gulf: Peace-Building in West Asia* (I.B. Tauris, 2003), 35.

⁶ Lt. Col. Fred L. Hart, Jr., “A Veteran’s Story.” Military.Com Database, www.military.com/History_Content/1.14476.his_vet_gulfwar%7CFred_Hart.00.html [Accessed March 2007].

⁷ Ibid.

After a series of minor military exercises and no significance for a period of four years, the GCC Shield Forces⁸ shut down in the beginning of 2006. This caused a major loss in confidence for the GCC countries, which is very essential to a stable region. As Joseph Kechichian put it, “Naturally, the more GCC countries have confidence in themselves, the more they can contribute to regional stability.”⁹ As a result, the Gulf monarchies have always relied on foreign powers to protect their interests, and so they have become dependent on foreign forces to fight on their behalf.

3. What Could Be Done

Yemen has always been seen as a potential solution to this security threat, either as the only solution or a major player in a solution. In the aftermath of the 1991 War for Kuwait, leading commentators have argued that a more prominent role by Arab states such as Yemen¹⁰ is important. Furthermore, “Yemen is expected to join the GCC and its participation is vital to a viable security regime in the region,”¹¹ and “Yemen must necessarily be included.”¹²

Other solutions suggested including other countries in the agreement, thus Yemen could be included as well. To close down illicit cross-border trafficking, the GCC needs partnerships with Iraq and Yemen, as well as Iran.¹³ To attain any semblance of prosperity and peace, all three neighbors-Iran, Iraq, and Yemen-should be greeted and entrusted with a role in regional affairs.¹⁴ Surprisingly, and given a history of border and political conflicts, the strongest country in the GCC showed the initiative in accepting

⁸ The forces of the GCC combined to form a united military to protect their interests.

⁹ Kechichian, *Iran, Iraq and the Arab Gulf States*, 403.

¹⁰ Ibid., 409.

¹¹ Tehranian, *Bridging a Gulf: Peace-Building in West Asia*, 11.

¹² Ibid., 88.

¹³ Knights, *Troubled Waters: Future U.S. Security Assistance in the Persian Gulf*, 192.

¹⁴ Ibid., 405.

those propositions. “Saudi Arabian foreign minister Prince Saud al-Faisal expressed support for an inclusive Gulf-wide security arrangement (involving the GCC, Iran, Iraq, and Yemen).”¹⁵

D. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

This research will be primarily conducted by the policy analysis method. Since the current policies in the region on Yemen and the Gulf Cooperation Council with regards to border and terrorism will be reviewed, it is more suitable to examine this research from that perspective. The chapter on the GCC forces will be a case study, in which the assets will be scrutinized, as well as what led to their failure. Therefore, it will be feasible at the end of the search to address a few policy recommendations to solve the security threat of the Arabian Peninsula.

The area of study that will be focused on is considered lacking. There are many media reports and news articles, yet the essence of scholarly text is missing. Therefore, part of the task will be to find information in a thorough search. For example, for the primary sources, quotations will be needed from the current policy makers in Yemen and the GCC. Therefore, by documenting recent interviews with high profile decision makers, the research will be up to date and more rigorous than it would be if used as a primary source or basis for research by other researchers. Other primary sources will be cited from a few books and organizations like the Center for Strategic and International Studies and Jane’s Publications. The secondary sources will be the news and reported media documents from news sources both in Yemen and the Gulf region.

¹⁵ Knights, *Troubled Waters: Future U.S. Security Assistance in the Persian Gulf*, 194.

II. HISTORY OF THE REGION

A. INTRODUCTION

The Arabian Peninsula was inhabited by nomads whose view of territory was defined by authority, allegiance and leadership. This view began to change with the advent of the first oil concession in 1930. The inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula were then left to quarrel over the border lines. In the early 1970s, four main border disputes involving members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states occurred with each other, or with Yemen. Of these four disputes, one has recently been rekindled. Saudi Arabia maintained border disputes with Yemen, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. The fourth border dispute was between Bahrain and Qatar.

B. BORDER CONFLICTS

1. History of Borders

Nomads were the main inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula. As was their way of life, nomads spent their life traveling from one location to the next based on the season and water supply. This type of movement might lead one to wrongly assume that nomadic tribes do not have a real notion of territory. The nomadic concept of territory is not one defined by lines drawn on a map. Instead, territory is defined by human authority, allegiance and leadership. They view territorial ownership as durational that often changes with the seasons.

Up until the early twentieth century, no exact territorial boundaries were defined in the Arabian Peninsula. This form of traditional boundaries made it extremely difficult to define legal boundaries. As Ian Brownie, a leading legal authority on international boundaries, pointed out, there is a “relative insignificance of traditional boundaries in the world today.”¹⁶ There were many factors that prompted the creation of borders; two of which are: the discovery of oil and control over oil production as well as the colonial influence.

¹⁶ Richard Schofield, “Negotiating the Saudi-Yemeni International Boundary,” *The British-Yemeni Society*, July 2000. <http://www.al-bab.com/bys/articles/schofield00.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

With the signing of the first oil concession in the 1930s, border delimitation began. It was the British who had maintained and monitored national boundaries, though borders were never properly demarcated. Thus, when oil was sought after and found, many border conflicts began. With the withdrawal of British officials in the early 1970s, territorial claims came out in the open.¹⁷

a. Wahhabi Explosion

Saudi Arabian border lines were influenced by the Wahhabi movement. The origins of the Wahhabi movement dates back to mid-eighteenth century Najd, to a man named Mohammed ibn ‘Abd Al-Wahhab. As a religious scholar in the Arabian oasis town of ‘Uyaynah, Abd Al-Wahhab came to the conclusion that most Muslims,’ including his own teachers,’ belief in the doctrine of *tawhid* (absolute monotheism, a doctrine of the unity and uniqueness of God) was distorted. He preached that Muslims should return to the true teachings of God by following the words of the Quran and the preaching of the Muslim prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He preached “revolutionary ideas of religious reformation on fundamentalist lines.”¹⁸ Any Muslim who did not follow his strict interpretation of Islam was labeled as a *murtadd* (apostate) or *mushrik* (polytheist). Abd Al-Wahhab found many practices of his time blasphemous: such practices as praying to the dead, making pilgrimages to mosques and tombs, using votives and making sacrifices to any one other than God, and the lack of proper attention to obligatory prayers. He denounced anyone, Muslim or not, who did any of the aforementioned things. Only those who followed his strict teaching were considered to be true Muslims.

The Islamic scholars of the Ottoman Empire (the Islamic state at that time) rejected Abd Al-Wahhab’s views. In 1744, Abd al-Wahhab sought refuge at Al-Dir’iyah. Al-Dir’iyah was ruled by Muhammad bin Saud Al Saud. Abd Al-Wahhab’s critique of

¹⁷ Helem Chapin Metz, ed., *Persian Gulf States: A Country Study*, Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1993. <http://countrystudies.us/Persian-gulf-states/94.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

¹⁸ Britannica Online, “Arabia: THE COUNTRIES OF ARABIA: Saudi Arabia: HISTORY: The Wahhabi movement,” 1997. <http://www.naqshbandi.org/ottomans/wahhabi/origins.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

the Ottoman Khalifa was welcomed by the rebellious Al Saud. A relationship was formed by the two men with Al Saud at the political front and Al-Wahhab at the spiritual front. And thus began the Wahhabi movement.

After the death of Mohammed bin Saud, his son, Abdul Aziz Bin Muhammad became the ruler of Al-Dir'iyah. Based on the Wahhabi teachings, Al Saud declared himself leader of the Muslims and began the practice of inherited authority (Wilayat ul-A'hal) with his son Saud as his successor. This challenged the Ottoman Khalifa in Istanbul. Also, with the support of the Wahhabi teachings, all Muslims had to present their *bayah* (oath of allegiance) to the Muslim ruler, who in turn must guide his people according to the laws of God.¹⁹

Al Saud then sought to capture all of Arabia by spreading the Wahhabi school of thought. By the start of the nineteenth century, the Al Sauds attacked Karbala and destroyed the Shi'ite shrine of the tomb of Caliph al-Husayn. In 1803, the Al Sauds captured Mecca and Medina. The implications of taking control of the Muslim land of pilgrimage were strong enough to get the attention of the Ottoman Khalifa. The Ottoman army, led by the Ottoman Viceroy of Egypt, recaptured all of al Hijaz from the Al Sauds and freed it from Wahhabi political authority.²⁰

The Al Sauds then settled into Riyadh, but internal turmoil weakened them. By the late nineteenth century, the rival family of Al Rashid drove the Al Sauds out of Riyadh and into exile in Kuwait. In 1902, Abd Al Aziz Bin Abd Ul Rahman Al Saud fought the Al Rahids and regained control of Riyadh. There he established himself as the Wahhabi Imam. Imam Abd Al Aziz utilized the military help of the "radical Ikhwan forces ... [who were] desert warriors ... dedicated to promoting Wahhabi Islam"²¹ to conquer al Hijaz by 1924.

¹⁹ "Library of Congress Search Result: Saudi Arabia: Wahhabi Theology," December 1992. <http://servercc.oakton.edu/~pboisver/WTC/LibCongWahhabi.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

²⁰ J. E. Peterson. Historical Dictionary of Saudi Arabia. 2nd ed., Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003, xxi. http://www.jepeterson.net/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/Saudi_Arabia_Chronology.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

²¹ Country Profile: Saudi Arabia. Library of Congress – Federal Research Division. September 2006.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia became an official state in 1932, a kingdom built on the basis of a Wahhabi state.²² The affluences gained from the discovery of oil made it all the easier to spread Wahhabi thought throughout the world. Wahhabi schools were built internationally and more publications could be made and circulated.

b. British Colonialism

Britain's main interest for control in the Gulf was to maintain a secure passageway for the shipping to and from India of its possessions. The East-West trade had been controlled by the Muslims during the Middle Ages. The Portuguese then designed superior ships that were able to withstand long voyages. As a result, they were able to transport goods around Africa and no longer needed to use the Red Sea route. The Portuguese were then able to extend their control of the Arabian Sea to include Oman and Iran. Local rulers were allowed control of their land, but they first had to pay a tribute to the Portuguese.

In the seventeenth century, the Safavid shah of Iran, Abbas I, challenged the Portuguese control of the shaykh of Hormuz. The shaykh had switched from paying tribute to the shah to paying it to the Portuguese. Because the shah at the time was too weak to deal with this issue on his own, he enlisted the help of two European nations, the British and the Dutch. Both nations came to the shah's aid and were able to drive the Portuguese out. Soon however, they both found themselves fighting each other for control of the Iranian market. Britain won. Thus, by the nineteenth century, the British had become the major force in the gulf.²³

2. Major Disputes

Despite treaties, borders are still disputed, particularly between Saudi Arabia and its neighbors. Saudi Arabia is the largest country on the Arabian Peninsula, covering over

²² Country Profile: Saudi Arabia.

²³ Helem Chapin Metz, ed. *Persian Gulf States: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1993. <http://countrystudies.us/persian-gulf-states/11.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

border. Asir, Jizan and Najran, ethnically Yemeni provinces, were ceded to Saudi Arabia. Much of the eastern border, however, was not properly marked for boundary limits. The maritime border in the Red Sea was also left undefined by this treaty.

With the booming oil industry, Saudi Arabia needed to plan for a strategic southward passageway to the Arabian Sea which would then lead to the Indian Ocean. Saudi oil was exported by tankers going through one of three waterways (the Suez Canal and Bab Al-Mandab in the Red Sea and the Straits of Hormuz in the Gulf).²⁶ None of these waterways belonged to the Saudis. It is safe to assume that Saudi Arabia would aim to win the border disputes to the south to provide added security for its oil exports.

One article of the Treaty of Taif states that the border arrangements, as described in the treaty, are to be renewed every twenty years. This treaty has since been renewed numerous times. Another article of the treaty prohibited the building of a wall or fence along the border. Claiming a rise in smuggling, Saudi Arabia embarked on a fence building project in 2003 along its border with Yemen. Enforcement of border control and restrictions was becoming more and more difficult with an open border with Yemen. In December 2001, the Saudi government's attempts to capture one of Osama Bin Laden's body guards, Abu Ali Al-Harithi, failed because of his moving around between the borders. Between March 2002 and February 2003, many border guards, Yemeni and Saudi, were killed in the frontier town of Jizan.²⁷ However, article 5 of the Treaty of Taif states that no wall or 'fortified building' shall be built along the frontier line. Yemen openly objected and refused the building of the wall project. Eventually, Saudi Arabia stopped its work on the wall between the borders.

After the unifying of Yemen in May of 1990, Saudi Arabia and Yemen needed to get together and agree on common boundaries and territorial limits. The unification of the two Yemens resulted in the presence of the first democratic country in the Arabian Peninsula. It was no secret that a successful democratic nation posed a

²⁶ Brian Whitaker, "Yemen Gateway: The International Dimension." April 23, 2000. <http://www.al-bab.com/yemen/pol/bwint.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

²⁷ "Lines in the Sand," January 26, 2007. <http://woodeneyes.wordpress.com/tag/borders/> [Accessed March 2007].

significant threat to its neighboring monarchies, especially to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia made many attempts to undermine the stability of Yemen's unity. Saudi Arabia had always meddled in the affairs of Yemen, even before the unification. It did so to provide just enough instability in the two Yemens so as to ensure its own stability. Saudi Arabia provided financial support to the secessionists and weapons across the border during the Yemeni civil war. It wanted to undermine the democracy and unity of Yemen. Yemeni unity prevailed and the civil war ended in 1994.

The new constitution of the united Yemen contained a line stating the "Republic of Yemen is an independent sovereign state, an inviolable unit, no part of which may be relinquished."²⁸ This led many to speculate that Yemen was now willing and ready to recover the 'lost provinces' it had ceded over to Saudi Arabia in the Treaty of Taif in 1934.

In early 1995, both sides signed a memorandum of Understanding. By signing the memorandum, they agreed to take part in serious negotiations to settle their border disputes based on the Treaty of Taif.²⁹ Both sides met frequently in the following years to discuss the border disputes. Saudi Arabia wanted to keep these negotiations solely about the border, whereas Yemen wanted to include economic agreements as well. Three years later, they finally came to an agreement and the new border treaty was signed. No economic incentives were added. The new agreements made the Taif line to the west permanent. The treaty also "spell[ed] out the general coordinates of the entire 1,500 kilometer border."³⁰

²⁸ Whitaker, "Yemen Gateway."

²⁹ The Estimate, "The Yemeni-Saudi Border Treaty," (12:13), June 30, 2000. <http://www.theestimate.com/public/063000.html> [Accessed March 2007].

³⁰ Ibid.



Map 1.2. Course of Final Border Agreement between Yemen and Saudi Arabia³¹

b. Saudi Arabia - Oman

Qabus ibn Said became ruler of Oman in 1970 after Oman's coup d'état. Qabus's rule sought to be proactive for its nations and the region. Qabus aimed to reverse Sultan Ibn Taimur's rule of isolation and hoped to make Oman an international force to be reckoned with. It should also be noted that Oman's geostrategic position of having a long coastline, as well as an entry point at the Strait of Hormuz, drew the attention of many foreign powers. With the interest of the foreign powers (mainly Britain and the United States) in the country, Oman's foreign policy has been nonconfrontational and it sought to keep good regional relations with its gulf neighbors.³² Oman resolved its border disputes with the United Arab Emirates and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1981 and 1982, respectively. Its border dispute with Saudi Arabia would only get fully resolved in 1991.

The Oman and Saudi Arabia border dispute dealt with the Al Buraymi Oasis. Rulers of Muscat, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and the Al Sauds all claimed this oasis settlement since the nineteenth century.³³ By the early 1900s, three of the nine villages of

³¹ The Estimate, "The Yemeni-Saudi Border Treaty."

³² Helem Chapin Metz, ed. *Persian Gulf States: A Country Study*.

³³ Answers.Com. "Buraymi Oasis Dispute." <http://www.answers.com/Buraymi%20Oasis%20Dispute> [Accessed March 2007].

Al Buraymi Oasis were claimed by Oman and the remaining six villages were claimed by Abu Dhabi. The Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia had, on many occasions, occupied parts of the villages and thus, with the oil potential of the oasis, pressed their claim on the territory. The British established themselves in the village of Buraymi in 1952 to support the Abu Dhabi and Muscat claims on the oasis.

In retaliation, Saudi Arabia sent some of its troops to occupy the village of Khamsa to assert their control of the oasis. To avoid further military conflict, a standstill agreement was signed that same year and an international tribunal was created in 1954.³⁴ The efforts of the international tribunal failed in 1955. The British, with the aid of the Sultan's army and the Trucial Oman Scouts, expelled the Saudi presence from the Al Buraymi Oasis. After its coup d'état in 1970, Oman sought to normalize its relations with Saudi Arabia, resulting in relations being formally established between the two nations by December 1970. In 1974, an agreement was reached between Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, settling the Al Buraymi Oasis conflict. Oman would receive three of the villages and Abu Dhabi would receive the remaining six villages in the oasis. A territorial corridor south and east of Qatar leading to the Persian Gulf was ceded by the United Arab Emirates to Saudi Arabia as part of the agreement. Control of the oil field at Shayba, which had yet to be exploited, was given to Saudi Arabia.³⁵ The border delimitation between Oman and Saudi Arabia was finalized and legalized in March of 1990.

c. Saudi Arabia - UAE

As mentioned earlier in the Saudi Arabia and Oman border conflict, Saudi Arabia's and the United Arab Emirates' main border dispute was over the Al Buraymi Oasis. Though both countries reached a border agreement in 1974, they are still in disagreement. The 1974 agreement was never ratified by the United Arab Emirates government. The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates dates back to nearly two centuries ago, between the tribes of Al Nahyan (now the ruler of Abu

³⁴ Answers.Com. "Buraymi Oasis Dispute."

³⁵ Helem Chapin Metz, ed. *Persian Gulf States: A Country Study*.

Dhabi) and the Al Saud. The more powerful Al Sauds dominated the impoverished Al Nahyan tribe. The Al Nahyan accepted their dominance but they strongly resisted Al Saud's strict version of Islam, Wahhabism. Their main point of disagreement was over the Al Buraymi Oasis, "a fertile jewel in an otherwise barren desert."³⁶

Saudi Arabia seized the land forcibly, but the United Arab Emirates, along with Oman and the British, reclaimed the land. To settle their disputes, the three nations signed a border agreement in 1974. At that same time, the United Arab Emirates was seeking international recognition. Saudi Arabia agreed to recognize the nascent state for a small strip of land that would act as a territorial corridor along the Qatar border leading to the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia also got control of a small strip of land between it and the United Arab Emirates, the Shaybah oil fields. The Shaybah oil fields are now producing over 550,000 barrels per day, thus producing revenues that exceed \$10 billion annually.³⁷ With the use of new technology, such as horizontal drilling, the Shaybah oil fields have the potential of yielding up to 18 billion barrels in just a few years.³⁸

Frustrated at the apparent loss of the Shaybah oil fields, United Arab Emirates officials are now declaring that parts of the 1974 agreement have become 'inapplicable.' Recently, the objection was made public with the publication of the 2006 edition of the official United Arab Emirates Yearbook. The Yearbook contains a map of the United Arab Emirates that seems to have nullified what had been agreed upon in 1974. The map shows that the UAE territory extends over to Qatar (containing land that had been ceded to Saudi Arabia in 1974) and extends to the south to include most of the oil field in Shaybah.³⁹

³⁶ Simon Henderson, "Map Wars: The UAE Reclaims Lost Territory from Saudi Arabia." PolicyWatch #1069 The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 19, 2006. <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2431> [Accessed March 2007].

³⁷ Henderson, "Map Wars."

³⁸ "Oil at Heart of Renewed UAI-Saudi Border Dispute." *Jane's Foreign Report*. August 2, 2005. http://www.janes.com/security/international_security/news/fr/fr050802_1_n.shtml [Accessed March 2007].

³⁹ Henderson, "Map Wars."

This new drawing of the map had not been published in previous versions of the Yearbook. There was no official apology or claim of error from United Arab Emirates officials, nor is there expected to be one.

This change of heart on territorial boundaries may be attributed to the current ruler of the state. The 1974 agreement was agreed to from the United Arab Emirates' side by Sheikh Zayed al Nahyan. At that time, Sheikh Zayed was seeking to gain independence and international recognition, so giving up a small piece of land for Saudi Arabia's recognition seemed fair. Sheikh Zayed passed away in 2004 and his son, the new ruler of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan no longer saw the fairness of that agreement. Sheikh Khalifa, on his first official visit to Saudi Arabia in December of 2006 as ruler of the United Arab Emirates, reportedly informed the Saudis of the border issue. The Saudi reply was that the border issue had been settled in 1974.

d. Bahrain - Qatar

Another border conflict in the Middle East stems from the land dispute between the Al Khalifa of Bahrain and the Al Thani of Qatar. The dispute is over Az Zubarah, (which is on the northwest coast of Qatar), the Hawar islands (that stand forty kilometers south of Az Zubarah) and various reefs in the Gulf. The Al Khalifa family had settled at Az Zubarah during the eighteenth century before driving out the Iranians from Bahrain. The Al Thani of Qatar strongly claimed Az Zubarah, which is on the Qatari mainland. They also laid claim to the Hawar islands as they were a stone's throw from Qatar and over twenty kilometers from Bahrain.

The dispute reached a high point in 1986 between Qatar and Bahrain. The Bahraini government had begun the construction of a coast guard station on one of the reefs off Qatar's coast, Fasht al Dibal.⁴⁰ Qatar retaliated by deploying some of its troops to remove and essentially 'kidnap' the workers. Through regional mediation, specifically by Saudi Arabia, both sides eventually came to a truce and Bahrain agreed to end its construction. Both sides also agreed to sink the Fasht al Dibal territory low enough into

⁴⁰ Helem Chapin Metz, ed. *Persian Gulf States: A Country Study*.

the sea so as to impede any future construction plans. Though the sinking of Fasht al Dibal may have helped solve their 1986 dispute, it would be impractical to sink the remaining disputed islands and reefs just to avoid conflict. Bahrain, for years, insisted on regional mediation, though Qatar refused, as it had ‘fractious’ relations with Saudi Arabia. Qatar was insisting on international arbitration and wanted to take their case to the International Court of Justice in The Hague. In 1991, Qatar took its case to The Hague. Bahrain eventually did agree to abide by the World Court’s decision. On March 16 of 2001, the World Court issued its ruling on the border dispute between Qatar and Bahrain. The ruling asserted Qatar’s claim to Az Zubarah; the Hawar islands belonged to Bahrain. The court also defined the maritime boundary between Qatar and Bahrain.

3. Consequences of the Disputes

During the 1990s, all of Arabia saw a movement towards the delimitation of boundaries. The political map of Arabia was progressively being finalized. Richard Schofield, Director of Geopolitics and International Boundaries Research Center at SOAS, London, attributes the motivation for this movement to many reasons, the main of which is materialistic and pragmatic.⁴¹ Many of the Arabian states have exhausted some of their older oil fields and are thus looking for newer, fresher fields. Many exploratory drives for oil have been conducted on most of their own land. The territory surrounding disputed boundaries has, “because of their politically sensitive location and general remoteness,”⁴² been relatively untouched by the oil industry. The implication that these lands would provide for more economic power was at a high and so many nations wanted to legitimize their presence in those areas. They wanted the legal authority to begin exploration, without any border incidents hindering their efforts. “The need to consolidate authority right up to the territorial limits of the state ... may help to explain the progress made in finalizing border delimitation in recent years.”⁴³

⁴¹ Schofield, “Negotiating the Saudi-Yemeni Boundary.”

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

Another reason Arabia is witnessing a move towards the finalization of the delimitation of boundaries is to institutionalize and legalize the boundaries, so as to adhere to and be accountable to international law. Boundary agreements, since the early 1990s, have increasingly been registered in the “appropriate international institutions.”⁴⁴ This implies to each nation and its neighbors that their territorial framework is at the ‘point of no return.’ The Gulf War was a major factor in this area. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) became increasingly occupied “with the entrenchment, institutionalization, where appropriate, the finalization of the Arabian territorial framework.”⁴⁵ A main outcome of the GCC summit of 1992 in Abu Dhabi was the inadmissibility of land that is acquired by force. The border disputes between the countries did not end without adding damage. The disputes left their mark in the form political bitterness, lack of cooperation, and instability and openness to terrorism.

a. Political Bitterness

Border sensitivities in the Middle East are never resolved 100 percent, though agreement after agreement is signed. This was the case with the border dispute between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. They both signed an agreement in 1974 to solve their border disputes. That agreement was then declared not ‘applicable’ just months after Sheikh Khalifa became the new ruler of the United Arab Emirates. With his new rule came a new political vision that included a United Arab Emirates with the land that had been ceded to Saudi Arabia as part of the 1974 agreement signed by the then ruler of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Zayed. Such actions substantiate the claim that rulers use border disputes to gain some competitive advantage.

Besides wanting to keep the land granted to it by the 1974 agreement, Saudi Arabia also has an interest in isolating Qatar. Qatar was not involved in the 1974 agreement, though it should have been as its border neighbor was changed (from the United Arab Emirates to Saudi Arabia). The Saudis are frustrated by the diplomatic

⁴⁴ Schofield, “Negotiating the Saudi-Yemeni Boundary.”

⁴⁵ Ibid.

independence of Qatar.⁴⁶ To enforce its political view, Saudi Arabia is disallowing the building of an undersea gas link from Qatar to Kuwait, claiming it runs through Saudi waters.⁴⁷

b. Lack of Cooperation

Currently, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are at odds over the building of an undersea pipeline from Qatar to the United Arab Emirates. The natural gas pipeline is costing the United Arab Emirates over \$3.5 billion and promises to add to the growth of the United Arab Emirates economy.⁴⁸ Saudi Arabia has objected to the pipeline and has demanded that work on it be stopped, claiming it crosses Saudi territory. A memo on July 8 of 2006 faxed by the Saudi government to the financiers of the pipeline project stated that the pipeline “cannot be constructed without the agreement of the kingdom.”⁴⁹ If both parties agree to arbitration, their dispute is likely to end up in the International Court of Justice.

c. Instability and Openness to Terrorism

Terrorism has turned these unclaimed stretches of empty and open desert into possible weaknesses.⁵⁰ Though the borders might be defined on written agreements, there is a major lack of personnel to man the open terrain. Terrorists take advantage of such weaknesses to easily move around in the Gulf.

⁴⁶ Henderson, “Map Wars.”

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Andy Critchlow, “Border Dispute over Pipeline Simmers in Gulf.” *International Herald Tribune*, July 11, 2006. <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2006/07/11/business/pipe.php> [Accessed March 2007].

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ “Lines in the Sand.”

III. GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL: A STORY OF FAILURE

A. INTRODUCTION

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) formed in 1981 after the Iran-Iraq War to ensure security in the region. Yet its drastic failure in providing this security was apparent in its inability to prevent the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It was not even capable of providing sufficient aid in the United States War in Iraq in 2003. Its ineptitude in providing regional security for its members has not improved. The addition of Yemen into the GCC would allow the GCC to accomplish better security in the region.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was created on May 25, 1981. The GCC includes the following six Arab Gulf States: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the State of Qatar, the Sultanate of Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. The GCC included the Arab States that overlooked the Gulf; as such, Yemen was not a member. The six GCC states held that a threat imposed on any one of them posed a threat to all of them. The states were joined by religion, as well as their faith in a common destiny and regional stability and security. The GCC Charter, which acts as the “constitution” of the GCC, dictates common laws in areas such as trade, economy, and tourism. Security is also a prime issue to the GCC. Security was one of the main reasons that brought about the GCC. The Iran-Iraq war posed a threat which the individual states in the Arab Gulf knew they could not handle on their own. As such, they grouped together to form a mutual defense plan.

The aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war marked a new era for the Gulf States. The GCC members all set out to strengthen their military capabilities by ordering top of the line weapons and equipment.⁵¹ Yet the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait proved the worthlessness of the GCC forces as a defense pact, as well as the vulnerability and weakness of the GCC. The GCC, with all its new equipment and talks of a unified defense, did nothing to dissuade Saddam Hussein from invading Kuwait.⁵² Lieutenant

⁵¹ Hart, Jr. “A Veteran’s Story.”

⁵² Ibid.

Colonel Hart notes that “[d]uring the weeks preceding the invasion, the GCC did not even meet in session. Even the Peninsular Shield Forces, a GCC reaction force of roughly brigade size, was not utilized or alerted during the entire crisis.”⁵³

B. WHAT HAS BEEN DONE PREVIOUSLY?

1. The GCC Forces Have Always Been Inept

a. Valid Weapons and Equipment Not Put to Use

One lesson the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait taught the Gulf States was that they should buy massive equipment and weapons. In the late 1990s, the “massive arms-buying spree” was put to a halt due to a lack of funding as a result of the low oil prices.⁵⁴ Ed Blanche notes that “Arab League statistics show that between 1995 and 2002, the GCC states spent \$277 billion on defense and security - around 12.7 per cent of their combined gross domestic product.”⁵⁵ Many of the GCC States spend a large proportion of their gross domestic products (GDP) on the military; for example “Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman spend up to 10 percent of their gross domestic products on the military, amounting to nearly \$21 billion, \$4 billion and \$2.7 billion, respectively...it is estimated that countries like the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia would spend up to \$60 billion this year.”⁵⁶

In Saudi Arabia, the Royal Saudi Air Forces (RSAF) is given a great deal of priority. The RSAF is the largest in the GCC. Although in the region it comes second to Israel’s Air Force, “it has little experience with offensive operations and its warfighting capabilities remain largely theoretical. This is due in part to its over-reliance

⁵³ Hart, Jr., “A Veteran’s Story.”

⁵⁴ Ed Blanche, “REGIONAL BRIEFING – GULF STATES: Winds of Change,” *Jane’s Defense Weekly*, February 9, 2005, 2.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Hassan H. Fattah, “Gulf States, Wary of Iran, Add to Their Arsenals,” *International Herald Tribune*, (February. 23, 2007).

on foreign technical support and personnel to manage and maintain combat operations.”⁵⁷ The RSAF has acquired five E-3A airborne early-warning and control systems (AWACS).

The GCC must move towards greater co-operation, says the analyst. They can't just keep throwing money at the problem and buying more platforms. They need a combined defence system in all aspects. They've all got to be on the same wavelength. This is where the smart money should be going - joint projects that allow them to deploy rapidly, with a common logistics network so that aircraft from one country can land on any airfield in the region. They need a network-enabling capability. Without this kind of co-ordination and interoperability all these platforms are just dead meat.⁵⁸

b. Lack of Personnel and Training

Members of the GCC are rentier states, ones where “their social contract rests upon provision of benefits *to* citizens, not extraction of resources (taxes and service) *from* them.”⁵⁹ As such, requiring an obligatory military recruitment service would oppose the contract between state and society. Of the six states in the GCC, Kuwait is the only one with an obligatory military recruitment service. Yet before the 1990 Gulf War, Kuwaiti citizens could have avoided the service.

Most of the GCC states also recruit only male citizens, thereby leaving out the other half of the population. The military career is not one that is given much thought to by citizens of the GCC states. There are not many incentives to join the military service, as there are better job opportunities in the civilian sector. All military services of the GCC lack prestige, save for the Omani military service. The Sultan of Oman's direct involvement with the forces gives it that prestige.

The lack of manpower in the GCC is one that has been greatly acknowledged, yet poorly reinforced. Saudi Arabia, which represents a large portion of the GCC in its size, announced after the Gulf War of its plans to double its military

⁵⁷ Blanche, “REGIONAL BRIEFING – GULF STATES: Winds of Change,” 3.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ F. Gregory Gause, *Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in the Arab Gulf States* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1994), 124. <http://books.google.com/books> [Accessed March 2007].

personnel to 200,000 by the year 2000. Yet by the year 2005, it had only 150,000 people dispersed around its borders. The priority of acquiring arms precedes that of military recruitment. Saudi Arabia has in its possession “315 General Dynamics Land Systems M1A2s, 450 US M60A3s and 290 older French AMX-30Ds, many of which are non-operational because of a personnel shortage.”⁶⁰ “A \$60 million programme to upgrade the [Saudi owned] E-3As’ capabilities was launched in 2001, although the Saudi crews are still unable to handle the complexities of large-scale combat operations.”⁶¹

Many Gulf States do not lack manpower, as they have large populations. However, a large percentage of nearly each state’s population is made up of foreigners or expatriates. Nearly 50 percent of both United Arab Emirates’ and Saudi Arabia’s total population are foreign workers. The rest of the GCC states have a slightly lower percentage.⁶² In the United Arab Emirates, 40 percent of the army is made up of foreigners. Oman, the GCC state that has a prestigious army, is the only GCC state that has tighter restrictions for its recruitments. Thus, its army is made up of mainly Omani citizens.⁶³

The lack of manpower in the GCC was greatly noticed during the Gulf War. The Kuwaiti army was made up of *biduns*. These were people who were not of Kuwaiti origin.

2. Heavy Reliance on Foreign Services to Defend GCC Interests

a. Iraq, Former Protector of the Peninsula in the 1980s

Though Iran officially relinquished its claim to the state of Bahrain in 1980, Bahrain officials, nevertheless, fear Iran’s alleged attempts to cause rebellion by using their impoverished Shi’ite population (estimated to be at 30 percent of Bahrain’s total population). Iran’s ambition in the region placed the Gulf States in an uncomfortable position.

⁶⁰ Blanche, “REGIONAL BRIEFING – GULF STATES: Winds of Change,” 4.

⁶¹ Ibid., 3.

⁶² “GCC Future,” Oxford Analytica Ltd. 2001.

⁶³ Ibid.

The “centripetal dynamic” for the formation of the GCC was to form a united front against a common threat – the threat was Iran. The GCC was formed as a reaction to the Iraq – Iran War of 1980. Both Iraq and Iran were much larger than nearly all of the Gulf States and so their aim was to construct a unified security front. The arrest of a group of men in Bahrain in December of 1981 alarmed many of the Gulf States. The captured men belonged to the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, a Tehran based revolutionary group that was alleged to have been funded by the Iranian embassy in Manama. They were planning to overthrow the regime there. This prompted the GCC members to openly support Iraq in its war against Iran.

b. The U.S., Current Protector since the 1990s

The United States War in Iraq in 2003 was mainly executed without the aid of the GCC states. Although the GCC states sent 10,000 soldiers and two warships to help defend Kuwait, these forces were not involved in the assault on Iraq.⁶⁴ The United States War on Iraq was seen as a removal of a threat to the GCC. The GCC was expected to plan a more effective defense strategy for the Gulf. Yet the GCC still relies on the United States for strategic defense.⁶⁵

Since the GCC states continue to buy modern weaponry, they invite foreign aid in the form of “continued reliance on foreign officers and foreign maintenance and training staffs at a time when all Gulf States are trying to achieve greater self-sufficiency.”

As part of the GCC’s effort for military cooperation between the six Gulf States, the Peninsula Shield (Dir’ Al-Jazeera) was dismantled. The reasons for this have been attributed to the growing rift between Saudi Arabia and Qatar in recent years,⁶⁶ and the fact that it has proven inefficient.

⁶⁴ Blanche, “REGIONAL BRIEFING – GULF STATES: Winds of Change,” 10.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ “GCC Dismantles Peninsula Shield,” *Jane’s Foreign Report*, January 19, 2006, 1. The rift between Saudi Arabia and Qatar is a result of “the alleged anti-Riyadh stance of the Qatari Al-Jazeera TV channel, the growing Qatari role as a US ally, the expulsion of thousands of Qatari tribesmen of Saudi origin over the past two years [from Qatar] and Qatar’s growing anger at Saudi Arabia’s hegemony and domination in the GCC.”

During the Ottoman occupation, Kuwait was part of the province of Basra, hence the reason many Iraqis (including the late Saddam Hussein) consider Kuwait a part of Iraq. Thus, ever since its independence in 1961, Kuwait has relied on stronger, foreign powers to provide its security; first the United Kingdom and then the United States.⁶⁷

Kuwait acts as the main logistical base for the activities of the United States government in Iraq. As for its own defense, Kuwait relies almost entirely on United States protection. The United States declared Kuwait a major non-NATO ally on April 2, 2004.⁶⁸

Kuwait's key military forces, as defined by the operational doctrine from the Defense Review Group (which was drawn up before the 1994 Gulf War), is to delay incursion for 48-72 hours until international reinforcement arrives to its aide. Kuwait spends a relatively high percentage of its GDP on defense. Between 2001 and 2004, Kuwait spent \$2.3 billion on arms deliveries, with the United States as its major supplier.⁶⁹ At any given point, Kuwait is home to around 20,000 United States personnel.⁷⁰

Bahrain, with a total population in 2000 of about 695,000 (of which only 460,000 are nationals), has a relatively small military force. Bahrain has, since the late 1980s, spent between 4-5 percent of its GDP on defense, with an estimated \$526 million (3.5 percent of GDP) spent on defense in 2005. This might seem like a very small number, but Bahrain does not rely on its military for its national defense, rather, it relies

⁶⁷ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Kuwait." Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, June 28, 2006, 30. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060728_gulf_Kuwait.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

⁶⁸ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Kuwait," 3. Being declared a major non-NATO ally qualifies a country to receive counterterrorism financial assistance in the form of an annual payment of \$3 million; the country is also granted aide in attaining explosive detection and counterterrorism R&D projects.

⁶⁹ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Kuwait," 4.

⁷⁰ It should be noted that Kuwait's military spending declined significantly since 2004, since US forces ousted Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq.

on de facto security from the United States.⁷¹ President Bush declared Bahrain a major non-NATO ally.⁷² The United States is Bahrain's largest military partner and has been the exclusive supplier of arms to Bahrain in over a decade long period, from 1993 to 2004, with total deliveries equaling \$1.4 billion.⁷³

Oman has proven itself a United States ally. Oman aided the United States and Britain in their 2003 Iraqi invasion by providing them with staging bases. Military spending, as a proportion of the GDP, would label Oman as the largest military spender in the Gulf. From 1990 to 2005, Oman's military spending, as a percentage of its GDP, ranged from 7.3 percent to 13.0 percent. One significant point in Oman's military spending from 2001 to 2004 was that it no longer solely relied on European providers; rather, the United States, in that period, became a major weapons supplier to Oman.⁷⁴

Qatar is a close ally to the United States with nearly 6,450 United States personnel stationed there. The main United States air base and headquarters in the Gulf are located in Qatar, as is the equipment of one United States pre-positioned brigade. As such, "Qatar is under de facto US protection."⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Qatar has large military expenditures. "[B]etween 2000-2004, Qatar allocated an average of 32.5 percent of its current expenditure to defence and security, the third highest in the Arab world after

⁷¹ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Bahrain," Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, June 28, 2006, 4. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060728_gulf_bahrain.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

⁷² Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Bahrain," 3. The US Fifth Fleet is headquartered in Bahrain with over 5,000 US troops being stationed there; the US also has a 60-acre facility in Bahrain's capital, Manama. Bahrain provides to US forces with critical basing facilities support needed during the war with Iran, the Gulf War, and the Iraq War.

⁷³ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁴ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Oman," 8-9.

⁷⁵ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Qatar," Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, June 28, 2006, 3. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060728_gulf_Qatar.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

Oman and Bahrain.”⁷⁶ However, Qatar does not spend as much in arms imports or new arms agreements; Qatari spending in this category has averaged at \$50 million in recent years.⁷⁷

Though the United Arab Emirates’ Sheikh Zayed and other United Arab Emirates leaders opposed the Iraq War, they nevertheless provided the United States brigade with pre-positioning facilities, as well as assistance to the United States and British forces. This, in effect, provides the United Arab Emirates with “some de facto protection against hostile Iranian action or any invasion.”⁷⁸ The U.S.A. is one of the largest defense spenders in the Gulf, with a defense budget of \$9.74 billion in 2005. The United Arab Emirates’ main arms suppliers are European nations, with the United State’s share as a supplier increasing in recent years.⁷⁹

C. WHY SHOULD THERE BE AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION

1. Billions of Dollars Worth of Equipment Should Be Utilized

The United Arab Emirates has been defined by *Jane’s International Defense Review* as having “one of the best-equipped air forces in the Middle East.” Though billions are spent on the pilot, aircraft, and its weapons, less emphasis is placed on “sustainability and maintaining high sortie rates, and many key maintenance tasks [are] left to [foreign] contract personnel.”⁸⁰

The GCC air defense system is not fully integrated. “In practice, the GCC has invested in what is little more than an expensive façade and internal rivalries preclude the

⁷⁶ “Executive Summary: Qatar,” *Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – Gulf States*, May 3, 2005.

⁷⁷ Cordesman and Al-Rodhan. “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Qatar,” 3.

⁷⁸ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: United Arab Emirates.” Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, June 28, 2006, 3. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060728_gulf_uae.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

development of well-trained and integrated forces. This make the United Arab Emirates Air Force heavily dependant on the United States for any large-scale operation against Iran.”⁸¹

On February 25, 2001, Hizam Al-Tawaun (HAT) was commissioned as a joint GCC air defense system.

This system, which is linked to the GCC air defense structure, includes tracking capabilities that enable the council countries to track any airplane in their airspace to help them synchronize defensive actions. Unfortunately, it lacks the overall netting and integration with air and surface-based fire units, and many other capabilities necessary to produce true, modern, real-time integration. It is a first step, but it is now more a façade than a capability⁸².

The United Arab Emirates Navy is in the middle of a procurement program “to upgrade itself from a coastal defense force to a blue-water capable one by Gulf standards.”⁸³ With the completion of this program, the United Arab Emirates Navy hopes that “together with Saudi and Omani capabilities the GCC can deploy quite a sizable naval force to the region.”⁸⁴ Having a naval fleet of such a size raises the issue of interoperability with the other GCC navies, as well as integration issues with the air force. Such a goal has “serious manpower and support problems.”⁸⁵ A major issue with the individual security structure of the Gulf States military is that they lack the option of being interoperable with each other.

“The formation of a missile defense system is the most obvious way in which the GCC can deal collectively with Iran, given Iran’s Shahab-3 intermediate range ballistic

⁸¹ Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: United Arab Emirates,” 16.

⁸² Ibid., 19.

⁸³ Ibid., 24.

⁸⁴ Ed Blanche, “United Arab Emirates Builds Armed Forces against a Volatile Backdrop,” *Jane’s International Defense Review*, June 11, 2005.

⁸⁵ Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: United Arab Emirates,” 24.

missiles that could be deployed against Gulf countries.”⁸⁶ The creation of such a system has been encouraged by the United States, though not much has occurred in this area.

2. GWOT

With the September 11 attack on the United States, the global impact of the twenty-first century asymmetric terrorist war and its implications became more than apparent. The international community came together to address this growing threat. On the 28th of September 2001, the UN Security Council passed resolution number 1371 “urging all states to cooperate together in stopping all terrorist acts against other world countries ... [the resolution] also urges UN members to cooperate further in the full implementation of the international agreements on terror.”⁸⁷ Such international cooperation calls for multilateral agreements and arrangements with the aim of preventing and suppressing terrorist acts and taking the appropriate actions against those identified as terrorists.

Therefore, in accordance with Article 6 of Yemen’s Constitution, Yemen is taking a proactive initiative in the war on terrorism⁸⁸ and is working together with the international community in the GWOT. On November 2001, Yemen’s President Saleh met with President Bush in Washington to provide “an accurate assessment of the security situation in Yemen, outlin[ing] the efforts the Yemeni government has undertaken to fight terrorism, and [to] clarify the existing cooperation agreements between the Yemeni and U.S. security services.”⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Cordesman and Al-Rhodan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: United Arab Emirates,” 30.

⁸⁷ COL Mohammed H. Al-Bukaiti, “Yemen’s Fight Against Terrorism,” USAWC Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, March 19, 2004, 4.
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/ksil/files/00028.doc> [Accessed March 2007].

⁸⁸ COL Mohammed H. Al-Bukaiti, 4. Article 6 of the Yemeni Constitution affirms the government’s commitment in implementing international law and the UN’s charter. Other international agreements and resolutions that Yemen has taken a positive role in advocating are: 1- the Arab Interior Ministers’ Council Resolution number 257 approved in Tunis in 1996, 2- the 1997 Arab strategy for combating terrorism, and 3- the Arab Interior and Justice Ministers Councils agreements on Arab Anti Terrorism issued in Cairo in 1998.

⁸⁹ COL Mohammed H. Al-Bukaiti, 5.

The Yemeni government's counterterrorism efforts are in full cooperation and coordination with the United States government. The Yemeni government is in full pursuit of terrorists and is exhausting what measures it can to capture them. As part of its fight against terrorism, the Yemeni government established the Yemeni Special Forces in 1999 as a special unit aimed at combating terrorism in Yemen. The Yemeni police authority law number 15 was ratified by the Prime Minister in 2002. This law gave the government the required authority to 'start hunting' for terrorist groups and to foil any known terrorist threats.⁹⁰ In 2005, Yemen increased its efforts in internal counterterrorism to include "the use of mass arrests, prosecutions that resulted in jail time, and additional heavy guards on various buildings and embassies."⁹¹

Yemeni and United States cooperation was tested and was proven successful on November 6 of 2002. Yemeni intelligence had received information as to the whereabouts of six members of Al-Qaeda on Yemeni soil. The Yemeni government tipped off the United States forces and allowed the United States forces to send their Predator Drone into their air space to kill the Al-Qaeda members while they were driving in Yemen.⁹² By utilizing forces in the Arabian Peninsula, the United States would not have to exhaust such enormous efforts to fight terrorism, hence sharing the burden with a qualified fighting force.

If Yemen were allowed to become a full member of the GCC, then its counterterrorism efforts could be united and work in unison with the other GCC efforts so as to work as one unit, rather than many individual units working alone with separate sets of security intelligence.⁹³ This would significantly aid the GWOT and improve the counterterrorism techniques against Al-Qaeda's transnational war.

⁹⁰ COL Mohammed H. Al-Bukaiti, 5.

⁹¹ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen," Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, June 28, 2006, 23. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060728_gulf_Yemen.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

⁹² Ibid., 23.

⁹³ This is especially true for Yemeni counterterrorism, as Yemen is home to "5,000 non-state aimed combatants in 2005. This includes tribes that are not under the control of the Yemeni government, but it also includes terrorist organizations with large membership in Yemen." (Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen," 22.)

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IV. RISE OF REGIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL TERRORIST THREATS

A. INTRODUCTION

What is terrorism? Bruce Hoffman, in *Inside Terrorism*, provides the following definition:

Terrorism is specifically designed to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond the immediate victim(s) or object of the terrorist attack. It is meant to instill fear within, and thereby intimidate, a wider “target audience” that might include a rival ethnic or religious group, an entire country, a national government or political party, or public opinion in general.... Through the publicity generated by their violence, terrorists seek to obtain the leverage, influence and power they otherwise lack to effect political change on either a local or an international scale.⁹⁴

The effects of terrorism are global (as a side-effect of globalization), in which anyone is a target – military and civilian. This new wave of terrorism knows no national boundaries, where large-scale attacks are perpetrated in different countries – all for the same cause.

Middle Eastern nations view Islamic extremist movements as national threats to be reckoned with, as all have suffered terrorist attacks. All nations have had their political agendas transformed to establish improved security procedures on how to deal with Islamic extremism.

While militarism and proliferation pose potential threats to the region’s development and energy exports, the most active threat of violence now comes from this violent extremism. It does not, however, have one source or represent one cause. Some movements have arisen in response to state terrorism, some movements have arisen in response to regional conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian War, and other elements have developed more

⁹⁴ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 44.

in response to the pressures of social change. The end result is a complex mix of threats including national movements, regional movements, and truly international movements like Al Qaeda.⁹⁵

B. AL-QAEDA

The Al-Qaeda terrorist network was established in the late 1980s by Osama Bin Laden. Prior to that, Bin Laden had been a United States ally in the United States' Cold War, in which he fought with the Afghan mujahideen against the occupying forces of the Soviet Union. After that war, Bin Laden, a Wahhabi follower, looked for other Islamic causes to fight in. Al-Qaeda was formed with the purpose of "restor[ing] or recreat[ing] the Islamic Caliphate combining religious, social, economic, and political power in a great sweep across the Islamic crescent from Saudi Arabia to Southeast Asia."⁹⁶ The leaders of Al-Qaeda have made clear their four main goals: 1- rid the Persian Gulf of the presence of United States forces, 2- kill many Americans, 3- support the Palestinian cause, and 4- start a pan-Islamic revolution.⁹⁷

Al-Qaeda's activities do not target any one nation, but rather it is a global threat. Al-Qaeda members consist of a multitude of nationalities; it also serves as an 'umbrella' organization for many Islamic Sunni extremist groups. Since its formation, Al-Qaeda has been involved in scores of terrorist activities aiming to destroy Western interests in the Islamic world.

A subgroup of Al-Qaeda is the Al-Qaeda Organization of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Based in Saudi Arabia, the AQAP seeks to take advantage of the open borders between Saudi Arabia and its neighbors to spread attacks on the Peninsula.

In keeping with Al-Qaeda's dismissal of secular governments and boundaries as artificial factors that divide the Islamic world, the strategy considered the Arabian Peninsula to be a single indivisible area of

⁹⁵ Anthony H. Cordesman, "Terrorist and Extremist Movements in the Middle East: The Impact on the Regional Military Balance," Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, March 29, 2005, 3. [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/050329_terrandextmvmts\[1\].pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/050329_terrandextmvmts[1].pdf) [Accessed March 2007].

⁹⁶ Lewis A. Dunn, "Can Al-Qaeda Be Deterred From Using Nuclear Weapons?" Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Occasional Paper 3. (National Defence University Press, July 2005). http://www.ppl.nl/books/ebooks/206-186_CSWMDOCP3WEB.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

⁹⁷ Peter Bergen, *Holy War, Inc.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 24-40.

operations. In essence, the AQAP leadership planned to develop a firm base of operations in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, before extending the network into neighboring states. The early execution of AQAP's militant campaign in May 2003 led to the shattering of the organization in July 2003.⁹⁸

C. MAJOR INCIDENTS

1. Saudi Arabia

[T]he primary threat to Saudi stability — including the reliability of its oil infrastructure — comes from domestic Sunni terrorist groups that subscribe to a more purist version of Wahhabi Islam than the Saudi government itself does. These groups, which are populist in nature and which challenge the authority of government sponsored clerics, question the legitimacy and ruling practices of the entire Al Saud family, including its positive relations with the West and its overall economic-political openings to the outside world.⁹⁹

Saudi Arabia experienced two major terrorist attacks before 2001. On the 13th of November 1995, a truck filled with explosives was detonated at the National Guard Headquarters in Riyadh. This resulted in the death of five United States servicemen and two Iranians¹⁰⁰ and over sixty people were injured. Four Saudis, admitting to being influenced by Osama Bin Laden, were executed one year later for that crime.

In 1996, another truck full of explosives was detonated in Al Khubar in a United States military housing complex killing nineteen Americans and injuring over four-hundred people of differing nationalities. The Saudi government suspects that Iran backed Saudi Shi'ite were behind this attack. Of the nineteen September 11 hijackers, fifteen of them were Saudi. The Guantanamo Bay prison holds approximately one

⁹⁸ Michael Knights, "Northern Gulf Vulnerable to Infiltration by Terrorist Groups" *Jane's Intelligence Review*, October 1, 2005, 2.

⁹⁹ Michael Ryan Kraig, "Forging a New Security Order for the Persian Gulf," *Middle East Policy* 13 (1), 84-101. <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1475-4967.2006.00240.x> [Accessed March 2007].

¹⁰⁰ Anthony H. Cordesman, "Terrorist and Extremist Movements in the Middle East: The Impact on the Regional Military Balance," 4.

hundred Saudi nationals.¹⁰¹ The year 2003 saw a series of suicide bomb attacks on residential compounds in Riyadh, killing over fifty-three people with over one hundred and fifty-seven injured¹⁰².

Saudi Arabia has had to shift many parts of its military forces to focus on counterterrorism missions as it has been experiencing terrorist attacks long before September 11; Saudi territory is, after all, viewed by Al-Qaeda as “the core of a new ... ‘Caliphate.’”¹⁰³ As such, Saudi Arabia has, since May 2003, made the focus of its National Guard to be counterterrorism and to support the Ministry of the Interior’s security and counterterrorism operations. The Saudi Border Guard has also shifted its mission focus from anti-smuggling to defense against terrorism. With these and many other efforts in place, Saudi Arabia has, since the end of 2004, been able to prevent many Al-Qaeda attacks and has even succeeded in putting Al-Qaeda on the defensive.¹⁰⁴ One point of concern to the Saudi Border Guard is the tribesmen who travel to and from Yemen across the border.

In February 2006, the Saudi government was able to foil an attempt to destroy the Saudi oil complex, Abqaiq, which was attacked by Al-Qaeda militants.¹⁰⁵

2. Yemen

Yemen has largely unsecured territories and borders, making it a likely platform for terrorists. Other issues of Yemeni society that make it prone to terrorism are the high population density with the general population suffering from unemployment, resulting in over forty percent of Yemenis suffering from extreme poverty.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ J. E. Peterson, *Historical Dictionary of Saudi Arabia*, xxxvii.

¹⁰² “Saudi Arabia risk: Political Stability Risk.” Economist Intelligence Unit, December 1, 2006. <http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/2006/12/01/2132113.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

¹⁰³ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Saudi Arabia,” Draft Document. *Center for Strategic and Intelligence Studies*, June 28, 2006, 4. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/060728_gulf_saudi.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰⁵ “Saudi Arabia Risk: Political Stability Risk.”

¹⁰⁶ Deborah L. West, *Combating Terrorism in the Horn of Africa and Yemen* (John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 2005), 28.

As a result, Yemen has been home to two major terrorist attacks that killed foreigners. The first was a suicide bombing attack on October 12, 2000 in the port of Aden against the USS *Cole*. This attack took the lives of seventeen United States Navy personnel and injured thirty-nine others. After a thorough investigation of the incident, it was found that this attack held many similarities to the 1998 bombing of the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.¹⁰⁷ The second attack was also a suicide bombing, but this time against the French oil tanker the *Limburg* in 2002 off the port of Al Mukalla. In 2004, Al-Qaeda suspects were captured and tried in the Yemeni courts for numerous terrorist activities, including the attack on the USS *Cole*. Two years later, the Al-Qaeda suspects were convicted of performing terrorist acts against Western targets as well as against Yemeni officials. In 2006, twenty-three of the convicted Al-Qaeda members escaped from a Yemeni prison. Later that same year, an attempt to bomb two Yemeni oil facilities was thwarted, resulting in the killing of four of the suicide bombers.¹⁰⁸

The Yemeni government is cooperating with United States efforts in the war against terror. The cooperation between the two countries includes: 1- training the Yemeni military force in the field of counterterrorism, 2- establishing capabilities for the Yemeni Coast Guard, and 3- providing the equipment and required training for Yemen's Terrorist Interdiction Program.¹⁰⁹

3. Oman

The Omani sultanate's national religion is Ibadism, which is of a moderate nature. As such, Al-Qaeda has found it difficult to recruit militants from Oman. There has been no indication of any Omani jihadists in Afghanistan or in the Guantanamo Bay prison.

Oman's major terrorist incident occurred in December of 2004 with the arrest of nearly three hundred Omanis from the Ibhadi sect. The arrests were triggered by a road

¹⁰⁷ Cragin, Kim and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror*, 42.

¹⁰⁸ Country Profile: Yemen. Library of Congress – Federal Research Division. (December 2006.)

¹⁰⁹ West, *Combating Terrorism*, 27.

accident that exposed a truck loaded with weapons, explosives, maps of Oman, books on military training and other suspicious material. The incident was seen as an attempt to disrupt the Muscat cultural and trade festival. Ultimately, it was revealed that only thirty-one were arrested and the Omani government denies the incident as being of a terrorist nature. All accused were tried and all were convicted with prison terms ranging from one year to twenty years. On June 9, 2005, Sultan Qaboos pardoned all thirty-one.¹¹⁰

Oman strengthened its counterterrorism efforts by adding security measures to inhibit Al-Qaeda attacks. It has increased harbor security patrols to prevent attacks, such as the one on the USS *Cole* in Yemen, from occurring. It has also implemented security measures to prevent terrorism financing.¹¹¹

4. UAE

The United Arab Emirates, a leading economic power in the Middle East, has experienced no direct terrorist attacks. The United Arab Emirates has proven itself a close ally with the United States. The United Arab Emirates has accepted the United States Air Force 380th Air Expeditionary Wing in its Al Dhafra airbase. The United Arab Emirates is on a path of rapid modernization and pro-Western policies. The current president of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, is ruling with a policy of “moderate pan-Islamism while also satisfying the security imperative of the post-11 September 2001 world.”¹¹² Though the United Arab Emirates has gotten a few terrorist threats,¹¹³ no major terrorist attacks have been conducted on its soil.

¹¹⁰ N. Janardhan, “Islamists Stay Clear of Terrorism in Oman,” *Global Terrorism Analysis*, The Jamestown Foundation. 4:5, March 9, 2006.
<http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369923> [Accessed March 2007].

¹¹¹ Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Oman.”

¹¹² Michael Knights, “Southern Gulf Co-operation Council Countries Brace for Terrorist Attacks.” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, (November 1, 2005): 6.

¹¹³ Michael Knights, “Southern Gulf Co-operation Council Countries Brace for Terrorist Attacks,” 6. There have been a few terrorist threats on the UAE. In 2005, as mentioned in the “Qatar Section” of this research, an Al-Qaeda leader ordered mujahideen in the Emirates to attack Western targets. Two online communiqués, one in the Al-Tajdeed website and the other on the Al-Sakifah website, criticized the UAE’s support of the Iraq war by allowing the U.S. military to use its soil for its attacks. The threat went on to threaten an attack(s) if Westerners were not expelled. Security initiatives were put into place, some arrests were made, but no attacks occurred.

Though the United Arab Emirates has not experienced any direct terrorist attacks, it has been the scene of many terrorist activities leading to terrorist attacks elsewhere. More than half of the terrorists responsible for the September 11 hijacking flew to the United States from Dubai.

Non-native terrorists have long used the bustling roguish entrepot of the UAE as a logistical and transportation hub. The combination of huge Asian migrant worker population remittances (estimated at tens of millions of dollars per day), an enormous gold market, and the presence of intertwined criminal and financial services elements made the UAE the central node in global terrorist financing operations that included cash transfers that paid for the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US.¹¹⁴

It has been found that the senior Al-Qaeda operative, Abdel-Rahim Al-Nashiri, responsible for the attacks on the United States embassies in Nairobi and Mombasa in 1998, the attack on the USS *Cole* in Yemen in 2000, and the attack on the *Limburg* in Yemen in 2002 was captured in the United Arab Emirates by the Dubai Security Service in 2002. Risk analysts have described the United Arab Emirates “as an easy operating environment for terrorists”¹¹⁵ and as such, terrorist attacks inside the United Arab Emirates seem unlikely, so as to “avoid the attention of local and Western security services.”¹¹⁶

5. Kuwait

Kuwait, home to an expatriate American population that exceeds 35,000,¹¹⁷ is a close ally to the United States. Nevertheless, there are a handful of Salafi extremists, many of whom have fought in foreign wars (including the post-September 11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq), that are planning terrorist attacks in Kuwait aimed at Western targets. The Kuwaiti parliamentary system has a well-established presence of politicians from the Muslim Brotherhood. “Traditionalist elements in Kuwait include large numbers

¹¹⁴ Knights, “Southern Gulf Co-operation Council Countries Brace for Terrorist Attacks,” 7.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Stephen Ulf, “Al-Qaeda MPs in Kuwait?” *Global Terrorism Analysis*, The Jamestown Foundation. 2:17, September 19, 2005. http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?issue_id=3464 [Accessed March 2007].

of deeply conservative but entirely peaceful Kuwaiti adherents to Salafi thinking.”¹¹⁸ There is however, a political struggle between conservatives and modernists. In 2005, women in Kuwait were finally granted their full political rights. That same year however, a Kuwaiti minister was forced into resignation as a result of his “failure to keep Western ways out of Kuwait.”¹¹⁹

Kuwait has kept its ties with the United States strong and this can be seen in the unprecedented Western military presence in the country. Nevertheless, terrorist acts have found their way into the country by “unskilled native terrorists”¹²⁰ who have no connection with the wider jihadi network. As such, their work has been described as amateur, scattered and isolated.¹²¹ Kuwait’s major terrorist incident occurred on October 8 of 2002 when two Kuwaitis shot one United States Marine and wounded another. Both assailants were shot dead on the scene by United States forces. Two other shooting incidents occurred within the next three months resulting in the death of a United States national and the wounding of two United States servicemen. Both attacks were committed by Kuwaitis who fled to Saudi Arabia only to be extradited back to Kuwait to be tried and imprisoned.¹²² Kuwait experienced other shooting incidents, all of which do not appear to have been masterminded by Al-Qaeda. Kuwait, nevertheless, established many security initiatives to address the growing threat of terrorism in the country.

At the beginning of 2005, Kuwaiti security forces led many raids on Kuwait terrorist cells, one of which was located near the Saudi border. Though the number of explosives and artillery found and confiscated by the raids were not that many, they did however signify the growing presence of terrorism in the country. Kuwait began a disarmament campaign.

¹¹⁸ Knights, “Northern Gulf Vulnerable to Infiltration by Terrorist Groups,” 3.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹²¹ Michael Knights, “Backing Kuwait’s Stand against Terrorism.” PolicyWatch#955, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, February 11, 2005.
<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2253> [Accessed March 2007].

¹²² Knights, “Northern Gulf Vulnerable to Infiltration by Terrorist Groups,” 5.

6. Qatar

Qatar, one of the southern Gulf States, has witnessed relatively minor terrorist attacks, all of which occurred after September 11. The first attack occurred on November 2, 2001 at the Al Udeid airbase. Christopher Blanchard notes that “al Udeid serves as a logistics hub for U.S. operations in Afghanistan as well as a key command and basing center for Operation Iraqi Freedom.”¹²³ Two United States contractors who were traveling near the base got shot by a Qatari citizen (who was a member of the Qatari military). The terrorist was shot and killed at the scene by Qatari security guards. Four months later, the Al Udeid airbase was again attacked by another Qatari citizen. The attack consisted of the ramming of the base’s main gate. The assailant was killed in the attack. Thus far, these attacks have been the work of individuals; that was soon to change.

Qatar’s first major terrorist attack occurred in the wake of a call by Saleh Mohammed Al-Oufi, an Al-Qaeda leader in Saudi Arabia, on the “brothers of Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and the Emirates, and all the lions of the jihad in the countries neighboring Iraq” to attack any target they deemed available. On March 19, 2005 (the second anniversary of the Iraq war), only a few days after Al-Oufi’s statement, an Egyptian expatriate, Omar Ahmad Abdullah Ali, set off a suicide bomb in the Doha Players Theatre. One Briton was killed and twelve others were injured.¹²⁴

Qatar has had a growing Wahhabi community since the 1970s. Qatar has also been known to harbor exiled Islamist terrorists and radical preachers from many nations, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Chechnya. After September 11, Qatar began a huge campaign to rid its government of Wahhabi extremists and began strengthening its ties with the United States. In April 2003, it accepted the U.S. Combat Air Operations Center for the Middle East in its Al Udeid airbase. In 2004, Qatar passed its Combating Terrorism Law, “establish[ing] definitions of terrorism and terrorist financing and broaden[ing] the government’s power to detect and prevent terrorist threats and to

¹²³ Christopher M. Blanchard. “Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations.” *CRS Report for Congress*. Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress. December 21, 2005. CRS-8. <http://www.usembassy.it/pdf/other/RL31718.pdf> [Accessed March 2007].

¹²⁴ Knights, “Southern Gulf Co-operation Council Countries Brace for Terrorist Attacks,” 4.

investigate and prosecute terrorists and their supporters.”¹²⁵ Qatar’s strong force in providing security to prevent terrorism proved why the March 2005 attack was on a nonresidential target and thus caused fewer casualties.

7. Bahrain

The United States Fifth Fleet is headquartered in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Fifth Fleet is the organization responsible for all United States forces in the Middle East and it is the only United States base in the Gulf to permit accompanied tours (where United States servicemen go on tour with their dependents). Bahrain is also the location of a large United States Navy base.¹²⁶ Bahrain, a mostly Shi’ite population with a Sunni ruling family, is considered a liberal kingdom, especially as compared to its neighbor, Saudi Arabia. The Bahrain Security and Intelligence Service keep a close watch on former jihadists in the kingdom. In July of 2004, the United States issued a travel warning to Bahrain. The perceived terrorist threat resulted in the relocation of 420 United States military families. In light of the United States warning, the Bahraini Security and Intelligence Service arrested six Bahrainis, all of whom were released for lack of evidence. The United States continued its pullout from Bahrain while the Bahraini Prime Minister insisted that “Bahrain has been and still is an oasis of safety, security and stability.” No terrorist plot occurred in Bahrain, only a diplomatic rift between the United States and Bahrain.¹²⁷

D. SAUDI ARABIA, THE BIG PROBLEM

Because of Saudi Arabia’s and Yemen’s inability to legally and officially settle their border dispute until 2000, the disputed territory had traditionally been controlled by tribal sheikhs. The result was that “Yemen traditionally has been a welcome haven for a variety of different militant groups, including Palestinian terrorists, weapon smugglers,

¹²⁵ Christopher M. Blanchard, CRS-10.

¹²⁶ Energy Security Analysis, Inc. Weekly Intelligence Briefing, “Terror Threats Bahrain and the U.S.” July 13, 2004, 1. <http://www.esai.com/pdf/Wb071204.pdf> [Accessed March 2007].

¹²⁷ Knights, “Northern Gulf Vulnerable to Infiltration by Terrorist Groups,” 11.

and mujahideen from Afghanistan.”¹²⁸ Though the Wahhabi backed Al Sauds were unable to expand their rule to include Yemen, Wahhabi teaching entered Yemeni society during the 1970s. This era marked the boom of the oil industry in which many job seekers began to migrate back and forth between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Another point of tension is the border shared by Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Many Saudis are fighting as mujahideens in foreign wars, such as the current war in Iraq. The Saudi fear is the fact that “[t]he jihadis engaged in the war in Iraq are returning to Saudi Arabia much younger and perhaps more independent than the mujahideen who returned from Afghanistan in the 1980s.”¹²⁹ As a result, Saudi Arabia, since 2004, is spending over \$1.8 billion to secure its border with Iraq.¹³⁰

E. YEMEN’S INTERNAL THREATS

Yemen’s internal security is threatened by many events, most prevalent of which are: 1- terrorism and extremist groups, 2- political unrest, and 3- a weak economy. Yemen’s significant internal security threats, if not addressed, could have an impact on the region as a whole.

1. Terrorism

The following is a table on the terrorist events that have occurred in Yemen since the attack on the USS *Cole* until the year 2006.

¹²⁸ Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism*, (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2005), 43.
http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG184.pdf [Accessed March 2007].

¹²⁹ G. Okruhlik, “The Irony of *Islah* (Reform),” *The Washington Quarterly* (2005): 28:4. 153-170, 158.

¹³⁰ Rasheed Abou-Alsamh, “Saudis Mull Electric Fence on Iraqi Border,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 20, 2006. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0420/p07s02-wome.html?s=hns> [Accessed March 2007].

Table 3.1. Yemeni Terrorist Events¹³¹

Date	Event	Responsible Party
January 23, 2001	A Yemeni plane carrying the US ambassador, Barbara Bodine, was hijacked by Sattar. Incident ended without any deaths or injuries besides those Sattar inflicted on himself.	Mohammed Yehia Ali Sattar (a Yemeni in protest to Iraq's international isolation)
January 24, 2001	A bomb exploded in front of the house of the commander of the First Defense Brigade of the Presidential Guard Brig-Gen Staff Ahmed Shamlan. This was the first such attack on a high-ranking security official.	N/A
February 12, 2001	A convoy with the Yemeni Trade Minister and Mahwit's governor was attacked in an ambush in Hijrat al-Dawagher.	N/A
May 19, 2001	In Radaa, a bomb detonated in a gun market causing 32 deaths and 50 injured.	N/A (could be terrorism, could be carelessness)
September 20, 2001	An explosion occurred at the Sheraton Hotel in Sana'a where FBI agents were staying. The explosion caused the deaths of four people.	N/A
October 14, 2001	A bomb exploded in a garbage bin near the Presidential Palace. There were no casualties.	6 people were arrested.
March 3, 2002	Two concussion grenades were thrown at the wall of the U.S. embassy in Sana'a. This occurred one day after the U.S. Vice President, Dick Cheney, visited Yemen. There were no casualties.	Yemeni University student
October 6, 2002	The French oil tanker, the <i>Limburg</i> was attacked by suicide bombers on a boat (in a similar style to the attack on the USS <i>Cole</i>). One Bulgarian was killed and twelve Frenchmen and Bulgarians were injured. The AAIA later claimed their original target had been a US Navy vessel.	Aden Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA)
December 28, 2002	A high ranking official of the Yemeni Socialist Party was killed by gun shots in Sana'a during a conference for the Yemeni Reforms Party.	N/A
May 14, 2003	A bomb exploded in a court room in Sana'a, injuring the judge and three other people. The attack occurred four days after an Al-Qaeda militant was sentenced in the same court (but by a different judge) for the murder of three Americans.	N/A
December 4, 2003	The governor of Shabwa was ambushed by gunmen resulting in his injury and the death of his brother.	Takfir wal Hijra (a militant group)
June 18, 2004	Hussein Badreddin Al-Houthi began a rebellion in Sana'a resulting in over 400 deaths.	Al-Houthi
January 31, 2005	Yemeni security forces came under fire in Ma'rib from armed tribesmen. This resulted in the death of two of the soldiers and four of the attackers.	N/A
February 2, 2005	A Japanese funded cement factory in Amran was attacked by two gunmen. This resulted in two guards getting injured.	N/A
March 27 - 28, 2005	A police patrol in Nushur was attacked. This resulted in the death of four to seven police officers.	No group officially claimed responsibility, though suspicion is on the Faithful Youth Organization, Al-Houthi followers.
April 3, 2005	The Sa'dah Security Commander was attacked in Sa'dah. This resulted in the death of one of his bodyguards.	N/A
April 3, 2005	The secretary general of the Sa'dah local council was shot at by a drive-by shooter, who missed.	N/A
April 3, 2005	A grenade was thrown out of a passing car at the Central Customs Authority building in Sana'a. This resulted in the death of a civilian.	N/A

¹³¹ Cordesman and Al-Rodhan. "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen," 24-25.

Date	Event	Responsible Party
June 21, 2005	A bomb was detonated near Sana'a University, wounding three civilians and causing minor damage to the campus.	N/A, though one man has been arrested.
June 22, 2005	A Yemeni Parliament official's car was attacked in Sana'a. This resulted in the death of the official and the wounding of two passengers.	Abdullah Al- Qawsi, the Deputy Governor of Al-Baydha, claimed responsibility.
January 17, 2006	The Yemeni Minister of Justice, Yehya Mousa, was severely beaten and shot in Zumar by masked men. Mousa survived.	Al-Houthi followers

Based on the terrorist events timeline from the above table, “attacks on foreign diplomatic targets and the Yemeni government assets took place almost on a monthly basis ... before the attacks of ‘911’ ... After 2002, Yemen began seeing major attacks on the government every six months, a noticeable decrease. Political unrests in 2004 and the downward turn of Yemen’s economy in 2005 have also brought a higher spurt of violent attacks in Yemen than had been seen since 2001.”¹³² If this threat is not addressed properly, more attacks are almost bound to occur. Yemen is on a move towards addressing and countering such attacks, but the elimination of terrorism needs international joint efforts and cooperation.

2. Political Unrest

Yemen has a population that is over 90% Muslim,¹³³ though the Muslim population is split between Sunni and Shi’ites. This split reached violent peaks when Hussein Badreddin Al-Houthi, a Shi’ite tribal leader, began a strong internal rebellion against the rule of President Saleh for “increased autonomy for his tribe and for his region of Yemen.”¹³⁴ Al-Houthi was against the war in Iraq and opposed the strong ties between the Yemeni government and the United States. Al-Houthi and his followers almost took over the capital city of Sana’a on June 18, 2004, resulting in hundreds of casualties. Al-Houthi was killed in September of 2004 and his father, Badreddin Al-Houthi, took over as leader of the rebellion. Al-Houthi rebels and Yemeni troops were engaged in a gun battle that lasted from March 27 – 28, 2005, that killed over seven

¹³² Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen,” 25.

¹³³ Ibid., 3.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 25.

hundred civilians.¹³⁵ A truce was reached between the Yemeni government and the Al-Houthi rebels. However, the fact that Al-Houthi senior has not been captured makes this a continued threat on Yemen's security. In January 2007, a renewed wave of attacks in Saada killed 41 soldiers and injured over 80 others.¹³⁶ The Yemeni government quickly issued a warning for the insurgents to disarm or face a strong retaliation from the army. For now they may have reached another ceasefire, but it is feared that the Al-Houthi threat is far from over.

3. Weak Economy

Yemen is the poorest country in the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen suffers from an ailing economy. Thirty-six people died in July 2005 as a result of protests that lasted two days in response to the doubling of fuel prices. Forty-five percent of the Yemeni population is living below the poverty line. Unemployment in Yemen reached a high of forty percent.¹³⁷ "[T]he lack of work and economic opportunities will make the population fertile ground to al-Qaeda recruitment campaigns and exploitation."¹³⁸ Yemen's economical situation may be dire, but with adequate help from the international community, this internal threat can be resolved.

¹³⁵ Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen," 25.

¹³⁶ Ginny Hill, "Yemen Fears Return of Insurgency," BBC News. February 5, 2007.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6331149.stm [Accessed March 2007].

¹³⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 26.

V. WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE, AND WHY?

A. INTRODUCTION

With the current rise of terrorism, the GCC should find ways to improve the way in which it deals with its environment. It needs to look past the Gulf and recognize the importance of including Yemen in the GCC. The GCC must recognize that its past efforts to maintain security in the region have failed. A main reason for that failure is their exclusion of a vital country in the region. Although Yemen is the poorest country in the region, it could bring many advantages to the GCC that would benefit them.

B. YEMEN TO JOIN THE GCC

Yemen enjoys a unique geopolitical placement in the Middle East. Nevertheless, Yemen is the only nation from the Arabian Peninsula that is not a member of the GCC, though its admission has been considered for a variety of reasons. A main reason for its admission is that of security. Gulf security has been associated with Yemeni security since the early days of the GCC. In 1983, the first Secretary General of the GCC, Abdullah Bishara, made the following statement:

“أمن الخليج وأمن اليمن لا يمكن فصلهما لأن اليمن شمالاً وجنوباً امتداد طبيعي لهذا الخليج وشعب واحد وأنه مهما كانت الاجتهادات السياسية فإنه في النهاية منطق الأخوة ومنطق المصلحة المشتركة ومنطق المصير سيفرض نفسه”

Which translates as:

Gulf security and the security of Yemen can not be separated because the north and south Yemen are natural extensions of the Gulf and we are one people and that whatever the political opinions are, in the end, the logic of brotherhood and the logic of common interest will impose themselves.¹³⁹

This statement confirms the first Secretary General’s view of the security of the entire Gulf region from a strategic point of view in terms of the relationship between the GCC and Yemen; and yet more than two decades later, Yemen is still not a part of the GCC.

¹³⁹ Abdulmalik Al-Fahidi, “Yemen and the Gulf,” *المؤتمر نت*, December 19, 2003. <http://www.almotamar.net/news/4916.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

In 2006, Qatar Ambassador Mohammed Ahmed Khaleefah stated that:

”المتغيرات و هواجس الأمن جعلنا ندرك أن البعد الإستراتيجي لليمن وأن أمنه يخدم الأمن لدول الخليج.” وأضاف
”لذلك استلزم وجودها داخل المجلس لكي تكون حامية لمنطقة الجزيرة العربية.”

Which translates as:

security changes and fluctuation made us realize that Yemen’s security and its strategic placement serves the security of the Gulf countries. Therefore, its presence is required inside the Council in order for it to be a protector for the Arabic Gulf area.¹⁴⁰

C. WHY?

1. Interest for the GCC Countries

a. *Yemen Could Provide Soldiers*

The addition of Yemen into the GCC has the potential of increasing total military manpower for the GCC. Table 3.1 confirms that Yemen’s full membership into the GCC would also lead to the rise of the total population of the Gulf to nearly 55 million. Yemen has a total population that is 3.5 times more than the average population of the six GCC States. A great percentage of the Yemeni population falls under the age group of 18-49, a total of 13.5 percent of the population falls in that category, or 2.8 million people. Furthermore, the CIA estimates about 237,000 young men were qualified for military conscription in the year 2005. This would enlarge and strengthen the military resources for the Gulf.¹⁴¹ Yemen’s total military and paramilitary manpower can easily exceed a total of 170,000 soldiers, including the reserve. In relation to its size, Yemen, with a paramilitary manpower total of 70,000, has the highest paramilitary power in the Arabian Peninsula.

¹⁴⁰ Ali Al-Saidi,, “Yemeni Gulf Symposium Confirms the Gulf Cooperation Council’s Effectiveness is With the Accession of Yemen,” *المؤتمر نت*, November 26, 2006.
<http://www.almotamar.net/news/37202.htm> [Accessed March 2007].

¹⁴¹ Abdulmalik Al-Fahidi.

Nearly all of the six Gulf States have a large proportion of their population made up of foreign nationals. Many of the six Gulf States allow these foreign nationals to enlist in their armies. Qatar, with a military age manpower total of about 239,000, has 70 percent of this pool made up of non-Qataris, most of which are non-Arabs.¹⁴² Yemen's addition to the GCC would allow for a more Arab concentrated military power.

¹⁴² Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan. "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Qatar."

Table 4.1. Military Manpower (2005 – 2006)¹⁴³

Country	Total Population 144	Total Military	Military Breakdown				Total Paramilitary	Total Numbers that Reach Military Age	Total Military Manpower Pool (Ages 18 – 49)
			Army	Navy	Air Force	Other			
Yemen	20.7	66,700	60,000	1,700	5,000		70,000	237,000	2,800,000
Qatar	.863	12,400	8,500	1,800	2,100		9,200	7,800	239,000 ¹⁴⁵
United Arab Emirates	4.5	50,500	44,000	4,000	2,500		10,000	30,706 146	653,000
Oman	2.5	39,700	25,000	4,200	4,100	6,400 147	4,400	26,391	581,000
Kuwait	2.7	15,500 – 16,200	11,000	2,000	2,500		6,000 – 7,000	18,743	865,000
Bahrain	.695	11,200	8,500	1,200	1,500		10,160	6,000	
Saudi Arabia	24.57	124,500 – 151,000	75,000 – 100,000	15,500 – 17,000	34,000		130,000	247,000	6,600,000

¹⁴³ Data taken from the following:

- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen,” 3, 7.
- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Qatar,” 2, 4, 10-11.
- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: United Arab Emirates,” 2, 7, 25.
- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Oman,” 10.
- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Kuwait,” 8, 28.
- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Bahrain,” 2, 7, 17.
- Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Saudi Arabia,” 5, 19.

¹⁴⁴ In millions.

¹⁴⁵ 70 percent of which are non-Qatari.

¹⁴⁶ Including foreigners.

¹⁴⁷ Royal Guard.

b. Border Conflicts Put to Rest

Yemen shares its borders with Saudi Arabia and Oman. Yemen has had many border clashes with both Saudi Arabia and Oman in the past, which resulted in Saudi Arabia gaining rights over a large portion of the northern part of Yemen. Yemen has resolved its border disputes with its neighbors. The last border treaty was signed in 2002 between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Nonetheless, clashes between Yemeni tribes and Saudi security forces do happen on occasion. This is a result of the unsecured borders between the countries. There is a total of 1,458 kilometers of land connecting Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Yemen might have a large military manpower, but that manpower is “grossly inadequate to deal with the country’s miles of coastline and undefined desert borders in the north.”¹⁴⁸ It is believed that terrorist networks (mainly Al-Qaeda) have benefited from this border ineptness to their interest of smuggling weapons and explosives between the two countries. The Yemeni army’s main border concern is to protect Yemen from potential threats coming in from Saudi Arabia and Oman. For that reason, Saudi Arabia, in 2004, began the construction of a security border and is now considering a much bigger and sophisticated border control system estimated at \$5 billion dollars.

All the countries of the Arabian Peninsula should unite their border efforts to make it more difficult for terrorists to mobilize in the peninsula, as well as implement a scrupulous electronic identification system. This system would provide its members with common access to data in order to positively ID travelers at the borders. In this way, the problem of illegal immigrants that Saudi Arabia complains about could be eliminated. At the same time, this method would create a great hindrance for terrorist who move around in the area.

¹⁴⁸ Sue Lackey, “Yemen: Unlikely Key to Western Security,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, October 12, 2000. http://www.janes.com/regional_news/africa_middle_east/news/jir/jir001012_1_n.shtml [Accessed March 2007].

c. Joint Military Training and Cooperation

The Yemeni government has taken serious steps towards finding a solution to its border problem. In 2005, Yemen signed a security pact with the United Arab Emirates to conduct joint military exercises with Saudi Arabia.¹⁴⁹ The aim of the security pact was to improve and strengthen the efforts between the two countries in their war against Al-Qaeda. Symbolically, the pact helped improve the relations between the two countries. The pact also emphasizes the Gulf States' realization that securing Yemen's borders against arms smuggling and terrorists benefits the security of the Gulf as a whole.

Joint military training and cooperation is important to all countries in the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen possesses a moderate air force and a weak navy. However, it has a significant army with good infantry. Yemen's military is an experienced one with involvement in a series of civil wars, internal heat and border clashes. This experience and Yemen's large military manpower can balance the other Gulf States' expensive military equipment that lacks the personnel to operate them.

A fault in the way in which the countries manage common threats in the area is their inability to cooperate with each other. Joint military training should be conducted excessively in the following fields: communication, counterterrorism operation simulations in different terrains, border monitoring and cooperating, military exchange programs to allow more familiarization with each country's system, and a broader program to include training with international forces. To fight a successful war against international terrorism requires that each country's forces be able to cooperate with each other.

¹⁴⁹ Cordesman and Al-Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Yemen," 3.

2. It Is in Yemen's Interest to Maintain Security in the Arabian Peninsula

a. Millions of Yemeni Workers Working in GCC

Yemen's major export is its labor force, in which millions of Yemenis work abroad, mainly in the other Gulf States. This arrangement helps Yemen's ailing economy, as a significant portion of the incomes made by Yemenis living abroad is sent back to be invested in Yemen.

Yemenis hold positions as trusted advisers in most of the gulf countries -- including their traditional enemy Saudi Arabia -- and make up the bulk of the military and police forces in countries such as the UAE, which has an expatriate population that outnumbers nationals by 3:1. Yemenis are preferred by these countries as security personnel because they are Arab Muslims, are intelligent and hard working, and because most want to return to Yemen when their employment is finished.¹⁵⁰

With Yemen's large expatriate force and poor economy, there needs to be cooperation between Yemen and the Gulf States so as to avoid another crisis similar to what happened in 1991.¹⁵¹

One of Yemen's biggest security issues is how to deal with the mujahideen who return from foreign wars. Many Yemenis fought in Afghanistan where they were trained in Saudi Arabian and Pakistani camps and supplied with equipment from the Central Intelligence Agency worth an estimated \$56 billion.¹⁵² When the war in Afghanistan ended, those 'battle-hardened young men' could not find jobs in Yemen's hard hit economy and so joined the army; in the army they could get an income (albeit low), food, housing, and a uniform. The influx of these mujahideen into the Yemeni army, coupled with the expatriate Yemeni work force from the Gulf States forced back

¹⁵⁰ Lackey, "Yemen: unlikely key."

¹⁵¹ Lackey, "Yemen: unlikely key." Yemen's refusal to support the Gulf War resulted in the Gulf States expelling nearly a million Yemeni workers from their countries (60,000 from Saudi Arabia alone) "in an attempt to cripple the fledgling democracy."

¹⁵² Ibid.

into Yemen, contributed to Yemen's 1994 civil war.¹⁵³ Bin Laden reached out to these young men setting up small businesses in Yemen, resulting in a third of Bin Laden's recruits being Yemeni.¹⁵⁴

This directly implies that Yemen's internal instability is linked to an increase in terrorism. Yemen, with its instability and low economy, could become a sort of haven for terrorists. Terrorist networks have been known to take advantage of poverty stricken populations to recruit and train them.¹⁵⁵ Though the terrorist threat might at first be internal to Yemen, it can easily become an epidemic and spread to the other countries in the Peninsula, since the exchange at the borders is feasible.

Therefore, more needs to be done to ensure Yemen's stability. In order to ensure regional security, economic aide to Yemen is necessary to ensure that its economy can provide for its people. Yemen's economic situation could be the cause of major instability in the region if it deteriorates.

With a little over 20 million people in its population, Yemen faces an increase in poverty, as 45 percent of the total population is poor. Yemen has a 35 percent unemployment rate. It should be noted here that Yemen is labeled as being a potential demographic time bomb. Yemen has a high birth rate of 3.45 percent and 46 percent of its population is between the ages of zero and fourteen years. It is only a matter of time before these young people will be looking for work. If no work is found, Yemen will once again find itself with a large group of restless young people, which is bound to ferment instability in the country.

With a young population and a high percentage of unemployment, danger is inevitable. Many Yemenis have no choice but to become illegal immigrants as they enter Gulf countries to provide for their families. This exacerbates the problem because more poor people are immigrating into the GCC countries.

¹⁵³ Lackey, "Yemen: unlikely key."

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ This does not imply that poverty produces terrorists, however, if the atmosphere has already been set by terrorist networks previously (and we have recent historical evidence of their utilization of insecure borders), then it is fair to portend that the chances of terrorist activities will increase, especially with Yemen's large young population.

Yemen, being an emerging democracy, is a cause of discontent among the six Gulf States. It is ostracized by its rich neighbors for political purposes. Economic plummeting could result in a failing state and thereby raise the possibility of it turning into a terror playground. It is of global interest to maintain a functioning economy in Yemen. Therefore, increasing economic assistance is a major step towards security in the region.

b. Economic Benefits

Integration of Yemen into the GCC would provide ample gains both to Yemen and to the Gulf region as a whole. “[R]egional integration would enhance competition and produce large economic benefits for both Yemen and the GCC countries.”¹⁵⁶ Forty-five percent of the world’s entire oil reserves are found in the six current members of the GCC, with Saudi Arabia controlling over 25 percent of the total. Yemen produces a little less than 500,000 barrels per day of oil, which is approximately 70 percent of its source of income. Yemen, being the poorest country in the Arabian Peninsula, would still have a positive impact on the entire region if it were allowed to become a full member of the GCC. “Further progress towards efficient integration and the eventual creation of a monetary union will likely strengthen the environment for non-oil economic activities and create employment opportunities for a rapidly growing national labor force – two important challenges facing GCC countries and Yemen.”¹⁵⁷ In a case study done by the International Monetary Fund to simulate the economic events Yemen’s integration would cause, it was found that the integration could lead to increased competition in Yemen, thereby generating an 18 percent long-run increase in GDP. A GDP increase in the long run would also be realized by the other GCC countries, estimated at about 20 percent.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Chami, Saade, Selim Elekdag, Ivan Tchakarov, “What are the Potential Economic Benefits of Enlarging the Gulf Cooperation Council?” IMF Working Paper No. 04/152, International Monetary Fund, 2004, 1. <http://imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2004/wp04152.pdf> [Accessed March 2007].

¹⁵⁷ Chami, Saade, Elekdag, Tchakarov, “What are the Potential Economic Benefits,” 3.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

c. United Forces to Counter Threats from Within and Abroad

Dr. AbuBakr Algirbee, Yemen's Foreign Minister, remarks that since the *Cole* incident, Yemeni Security Officials were able to strengthen logistical resources through the dispersal of security measures and prevent many terrorist attacks, as well as arrest a group of people that are part of Al-Qaeda.¹⁵⁹ If combating terrorism is a top priority of the GCC, it is also a top priority globally. As such, it is a point that proves the importance of Yemen's full membership in the GCC.

Yemen has adopted the Mercy policy in regards to combating terrorism. A report from the Middle Eastern Research Institute indicates that since President Ali Abdullah Saleh announced his Mercy policy, 50 people have turned themselves in to the authorities.¹⁶⁰ Yemen's role in fighting terrorism is two-fold: Yemen fights terrorist attacks and aims to prevent future attacks by directing some of its resources to fight the reasons that cause terrorism. Yemen has coordinated a committee of scholars with the aim of talking to the youth, to find out what the reasons are that would lead them to join any terrorist activities and then to work on remedying those problems.¹⁶¹

With the fall of the Iraqi Sunni Ba'athist party and the subsequent rise of the Shi'ites in Iraq, all other nations in the Arabian Peninsula now fear a rebel uprising from their Shi'ite minorities. Coupled with this is Iran's, a strong Shi'ite country, recent endeavor for nuclear capabilities. In order to face this possible threat, Yemen should be allowed to join the GCC so as to fight off a common external enemy together.

The Arabian Peninsula is experiencing extreme religious sectarian problems as well. Many fear the failure of all military and security strategies globally and locally in returning security and balance in Iraq. The possibility of the fearful terrorist cancer being spread into the rest of the countries in the surrounding areas is what makes it vital for Yemen and the GCC to tighten their relationship.

¹⁵⁹ Abdulmalik Al-Fahidi.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

Yemen, suffering from “political instability, poverty, large population, insecure borders, and constant illegal Yemeni emigration into Saudi Arabia means that Saudi Arabia can not ignore the rise of some Yemeni internal conflict affecting Saudi Arabia or that a new Yemeni regime might pose a future threat.”¹⁶² All countries on the Arabian Peninsula are in a war against terrorism, asymmetric warfare, the spillover effect of the current Iraqi insurgency, and Iran’s rise to become a nuclear power. That is why, to ensure regional stability in the Arabian Peninsula, the Gulf States should incorporate Yemen into the GCC, so as to fight similar threats in unison.

The GCC has stated its intention to combat terrorism. If security is of central importance to the GCC agenda, then it is required that the leaders of the GCC members conscientiously consider the importance of Yemen’s full membership into the GCC. This is true especially after the recent attacks in Saudi Arabia, which is presumably the strongest of the GCC states. Yemen political analysts point out that Yemen was able to successfully maintain a security policy to fight terrorism. Analysts point out that since the attack on the French ship the *Limburg*, Yemen has not had any major terrorist attacks, except for some attempted terrorist attacks which Yemeni Security Officials and Anti-Terrorism Forces were able to put to a halt.

Prolonging the decision to merge Yemen into the GCC will negatively affect the ability of the GCC, as single states or as a whole, from facing the hard events that will affect the area and its identity.

¹⁶² Cordesman and Al-Rodhan. “The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War: Saudi Arabia,” 4.

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VI. CONCLUSION

It is important for the GCC to attain the many benefits that will transpire with Yemen's full entry into the GCC. These benefits are important for the GCC, in order to develop and expand. Therefore, the decision should not be prolonged any longer. What affects Yemen affects the region, and vice versa. The obstacles in the way of Yemen's entrance have existed since the formation of the GCC. The first Secretary General of the GCC, Abdullah Bishara, had the foresight to understand that Yemen's entry into the GCC was only natural; that Yemen is an extension of the Gulf region, and shares its ideas. Therefore, it would only seem logical to deduce that Yemen shares the same security interests. Yemen and the Gulf region share almost everything, except that Yemen does not overlook the Gulf.

As a part of their nomadic heritage, the Arab states did not define borders to mark their territories. It was only with the advent of oil concessions that border delimitation began. This created border issues among the Arab countries in the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen and members of the GCC have border conflicts. The border disputes between the Arab states brought about political bitterness, lack of cooperation, instability and vulnerability to terrorism.

The border dispute between Saudi Arabia and U.A.E. illustrates the political bitterness that ensued. Although Sheikh Zayed al Nahyan signed an agreement in 1974 with Saudi Arabia, his son, Sheikh Khalifa believes that the signing of the agreement was only due to duress on the part of the U.A.E. in order to attain global recognition. As such, Sheikh Khalifa believes that parts of the 1974 agreement are inapplicable. He has sought to begin rectification of that matter through the drawing of a new map of the U.A.E., which includes land already ceded to Saudi Arabia. If Sheikh Khalifa is able to gain back the territory lost in the 1974 agreement, he would acquire the \$10 billion dollar annual revenue from the oil in the Shaybah oil fields. Such a great amount of profit would render the territory in dispute to be held extremely valuable by Saudi Arabia.

Although the agreements that were signed between the countries define each country's border, the borders themselves are not properly secured. This lack of security is embodied in the lack of personnel watching the border lines. As such, people are easily able to pass through country to country, especially now that the two countries just concluded an agreement to allow their citizens to cross the border with their IDs, and thus, there is no need for passports. This rendered these countries more susceptible to terrorist attacks. The border disputes also brought about the existence of terrorist networks between countries. The border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia is the site of many activities among terrorist groups, including weapons smugglers.

The border line between Saudi Arabia and Iraq is also a point of scrutiny since there are Saudi Arabians who want to perform jihad in Iraq. Those Saudis who return to their country after their jihad are unlike those who returned from jihad in Afghanistan, in that they are younger and more independent, thus are more likely to become a point of concern should they begin to harbor terrorist views. They would become more susceptible to recruitment by terrorists. And with the weak border patrolling between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, this problem could easily infiltrate Yemeni society.

Terrorism has been globally scrutinized since there is no immunity to it. Since radical extremists threaten the security of the Middle East, the Arab countries in the Arabian Peninsula have individually integrated security procedures to counter terrorism. Of the major terrorist threats today, one of the biggest is the Al-Qaeda terrorist network. Osama Bin Laden founded the Al-Qaeda terrorist network after the Cold War. The terrorist network began looking for Islamic causes to fight for. Unfortunately, the Arabian Peninsula is an ideal spot for terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda to carry out their terrorist acts, due to easy mobility and access to weapons. The main goal of Islamic extremists, including Al-Qaeda, is to rid the Arabian Peninsula of the American presence. This of course presents a great security predicament for the Arabian Peninsula. The lack of border personnel between Saudi Arabia and its neighbors allows terrorist groups such as AQAP to spread its attacks. The fact that this occurs should be an eye opener for the GCC in terms of allowing Yemen to receive full membership. This border issue would be resolved through joint cooperation when Yemen enters the GCC.

The GCC has not been able to solely depend upon its own security measures for protection. Although the GCC was founded after the Iran-Iraq war in order to secure common interests as well as to provide protection, the GCC was still inept as was evident in the Iraq invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The Iran-Iraq War began in 1980, and resulted in the Arab countries all attempting to strengthen their military. Unfortunately for the GCC, this was clearly not enough. The Arab countries could provide neither security nor protection without the aid of foreign forces, especially the United States. The worthlessness of the GCC, as it was, was seemingly apparent.

Again, after this war, the GCC states spent billions of dollars on weapons. They all separately went on their own weapons shopping sprees. Yet, again in 2003, the United States War in Iraq was undertaken without the military aid of the GCC. Although the GCC has spent billions of dollars to strengthen their militaries, this was not enough. There is still a dire need for weapons training as well as integration of the security systems among the GCC states themselves. This predicament still presents itself when the GCC states themselves commence to combat terrorism.

Yemen, on the other hand, although it has witnessed major acts of terrorism once before 9/11 and once after, has been able to effectively and rigidly combat terrorism. Yemen has fully cooperated with the United States, as was evident in 2002 when the Yemeni government tipped off to the United States the names of six members of Al-Qaeda.

Yemen's stability affects the stability of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, if the GCC granted full membership to Yemen, Yemen would give full cooperation and help in maintaining stability in the region. Yemen's stability is threatened by three major events: terrorism, political unrest, and a weak economy. Since the border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia is not fully protected and there are those within Yemen who are influenced by Al-Qaeda, it is important for the GCC states to provide stability. The importance of Yemen's stability is to prevent the aftermath of instability.

Another great advantage that would strongly affect Yemen's stability (through its full membership into the GCC) is that it would greatly benefit from economic aid that is

granted to GCC members. Yemen's economy is a direct threat to stability; therefore, any investment from the GCC would greatly improve the stability status. Since there is a direct link between economic instability and an increase in terrorist attacks, economic instability needs to be rectified. This issue is not only a concern for Yemen, but it should be a major concern for neighboring countries which are members of the GCC, since Yemen's security will affect the security of the region.

If economic instability were to ensue, then the people would be easily influenced by terrorist ideas and campaigns. Thus terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaeda, would find Yemen to be a place that houses susceptible targets for recruitment. These targets would then not only be able to perform terrorist attacks within Yemen, but would also be able to wander undetected, in some cases, to the neighboring countries. Thus, ensuring stability would close the door for Al-Qaeda, stopping it from finding opportunities to spread its campaign and find recruits. This accomplished, terrorist attack in the region would decrease.

Yemen's full membership into the GCC would allow its members to unite so that they can finalize and put to rest any border disputes. This could be regarded as a serious measure towards the improvement of relations between the countries, especially the military relations. The members would also be able to jointly secure the borders and therefore thwart terrorist attempts that take place as a result of the ease of undetected access from one country to another. The unification of all the states in the Arabian Peninsula would allow greater ease in monitoring travelers from one country to the next. This would allow for a system of identification and common access to data throughout the countries. Such a system is an ideal one for eliminating illegal immigration, as well as tracking travelers. By tracking people's movements, those who plan to perform terrorist attacks would be reluctant to continue with their plans. Hence, the system would thwart terrorist attacks.

The GCC relies on foreign aid for many reasons. One of these reasons is lack of manpower in the military. Recruitment is not mandatory in many GCC countries, and can be avoided. Therefore, the overall size of the GCC's military is relatively small. In the

United States War in Iraq in 2003, the GCC sent 10,000 soldiers and two warships to help defend Kuwait. This amount is utterly low. The GCC would benefit from Yemen's military in many ways.

Since Yemen has the largest paramilitary in the Arabian Peninsula, the GCC would be greatly enhanced. Yemen not only has a large population, but 13.5 percent of that population fit into the military pool of 18-49. This amount could not only enhance, but also strengthen the GCC's military power. Yemen's army (as well as Oman's) is entirely made up of Arab citizens, which is in contrast with the other members of the GCC. In the rest of the Gulf countries, they partly rely on Foreign Service nationals from other countries.

Although Yemen has a moderate air force and a weak navy, it has a significant army with good infantry. Yemen's military possesses experience, considering it has been involved in many civil wars, as well as border conflicts. The GCC could use this experience, together with the size of the Yemeni army, to strengthen the GCC's military. Yemen has also participated in military exercises with Saudi Arabia as a part of a security pact with the United Arab Emirates, in order to strengthen their efforts in the war against terrorism, specifically Al-Qaeda, as well as strengthen their ties.

One of the main threats towards GCC security is the lack of cooperation and integration between the members. Yemen demonstrated its ability to cooperate in 2002 when Yemen tipped off the United States of the whereabouts of six Al-Qaeda members inside Yemen. By doing this, Yemen was able to present its cooperation and thus share the burden in the war against terrorism, as opposed to letting the United States fight it on its own. Through this act, Yemen has demonstrated its ability to cooperate in the GWOT. It is as important to combat terrorism as it is to cooperate during this war. Therefore, Yemen would prove to be a great aid in leading the GCC into a more cooperative mindset. This cooperation would greatly aid the GWOT. There could be greater benefits in reaching the goal of the GWOT if the GCC could learn to cooperate with the aid of Yemen.

Yemen's policy towards the war against terrorism has been proven successful. Yemen's adoption of the Amnesty policy resulted in 50 people turning themselves in to the authorities. Although fighting immediate terrorism is important to the Yemeni anti-terrorism policy, the policy also attempts to understand the reasons that would lead a person to enlist in a terrorist group. As a result, a committee of scholars was coordinated with the aim of finding answers to the question, as well as finding solutions in order to prevent future recruiting from terrorist groups. This strategic approach is one of a long-term effect. By concentrating on the here and now, as well as the tomorrow and future of its people, Yemen aims at eliminating terrorism and destroying it from its roots, not just combating it.

Another important benefit arises from Yemen's entry into the GCC at this point. The GCC members have spent billions of dollars on military upgrades and weapons supplies. Yet they lack coordination and integration of their systems. The members of the GCC are beginning to integrate their systems, including naval and air forces. Therefore, such an endeavor is costly, and allowing Yemen to join the GCC during this time period would allow it the ability to integrate its systems with the GCC systems at the same time they are all integrating their systems.

Through Yemen's integration and a joint army, the region would be able to gradually rely on itself without foreign aid. The military would be a larger one and it would greatly benefit from the ongoing integration of the GCC militaries. The members would be able to learn to cooperate, and thus be able to come together and prepare a plan for implementation in the region. This plan would accomplish what each country is separately trying to accomplish, but through a group effort and cooperation there could be greater results. It would put a stop to terrorism.

The current instability in the Arabian Peninsula is a result of the current terrorism, asymmetric warfare, the spillover effect of the current Iraqi insurgency, and Iran's rise to become a nuclear power. Yemen is a part of the Arabian Peninsula; therefore, the GCC does not have to face the instability alone. On the other hand, it should unite with Yemen and cooperate in order to formulate a plan and execute it jointly.

The security of Yemen is a part of the security of the Gulf countries. This was duly noted by not only the first Secretary General of the GCC almost 24 years ago, but also by the Qatar Ambassador to Egypt, Mohammed bin Hamed Al-Khalifah. For this fact to be perceived 24 years ago and to be left unattended to until now is not in the best interest of the GCC. The many benefits that will ensue after Yemen receives full membership into the GCC should not be taken lightly. These benefits weigh greatly towards not only the stability of the region, but towards the security of the region as well.

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